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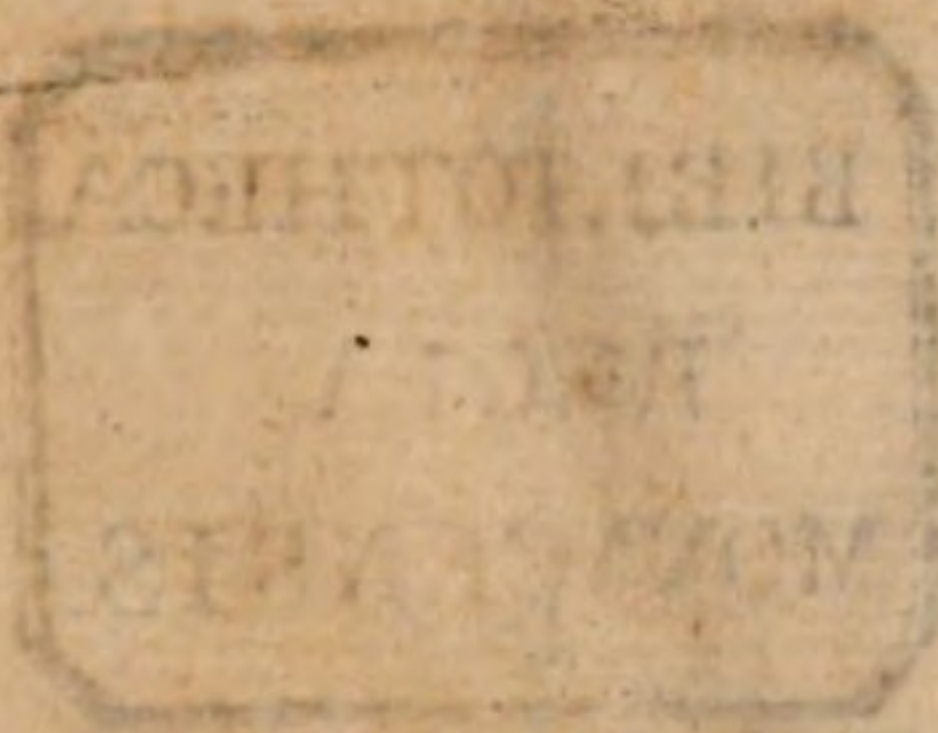

VOL. XXXV.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for J. BALFOUR and W. CREECH,

M, DCC, LXXIII.

BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS.

THE

COMPLAINT:

OR,

NIGHT-THOUGHTS

ON

LIFE, DEATH,

AND

IMMORTALITY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A PARAPHRASE ON PART OF THE BOOK

OF JOB.

Sunt lacrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.

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NIGHT THE SEVENTH.

BEING THE

SECOND PART

OF THE

INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

CONTAINING

The NATURE, PROOF, and IMPORTANCE of

IMMORTALITY.

V 3

AN ANSWER TO PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF

CONTAINING

UNDISPUTED FACTS

OF THE

SECOND PART

BEING THE

MICHAEL ANGELO

PREFACE.

AS we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A ſerious mind is the native ſoil of every virtue; and the ſingle character that does true honour to mankind. The ſoul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the ſerious of all ages. Nor is it ſtrange; it is a ſubject by far the moſt intereſting and important, that can enter the mind of man. Of higheſt moment this ſubject always was, and always will be. Yet this its higheſt moment ſeems to admit of increaſe, at this day; a ſort of occaſional importance is ſuperadded to the natural weight of it; if that opinion, which is advanced in the preface to the preceeding night, be juſt. It is there ſuppoſed, that all our infidels, whatever ſcheme, for argument's ſake, and to keep themſelves in countenance, they patronize, are betrayed into their deplorable error, by ſome doubt of their immortality, at the bottom. And the more I conſider this point, the more I am perſuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the diſtruſt of a futurity is a ſtrange error, yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be diſtreſſed. For it is impoſſible to bid defiance to final ruin, without ſome refuge in imagination, ſome preſumption of eſcape. And what preſumption is there? There are but two in nature; but two, within

the compaſs of human thought. And theſe are,—That either God will not, or cannot puniſh. Conſidering the divine attributes, the firſt is too groſs to be digeſted by our ſtrongeſt wiſhes. And, ſince Omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as Holineſs, that God cannot puniſh, is as abſurd a ſuppoſition as the former. God certainly can puniſh, as long as wicked men exiſt. In non-exiſtence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, conſequently, non-exiſtence is their ſtrongeſt wiſh. And ſtrong wiſhes have a ſtrange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner almoſt incredible. And ſince, on this member of their alternative, there are ſome very ſmall appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed; they lay hold on this chimera, to ſave themſelves from the ſhock, and horror, of an immediate and abſolute deſpair.

On reviewing my ſubject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, throw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to purſue it, as it appeared to me to ſtrike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages, it is, accordingly, purſued at large; and ſome arguments for immortality, new (at leaſt to me) are ventured on in them. There, alſo, the writer has made an attempt to ſet the groſs abſurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view, than is (I think) to be met with elſewhere.

The gentlemen, for whoſe ſake this attempt was chiefly made, profeſs great admiration for the wiſdom of heathen antiquity: What pity 'tis they are not ſincere! If they were ſincere, how would it mortify them to conſider, with what contempt, and abhorrence, their notions would have been received, by thoſe whom they ſo much admire? what degree of contempt, and abhorrence, would fall to their ſhare, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their heathen worthies, Socrates ('tis well known) was the moſt guarded, diſpaſſionate, and compoſed: Yet this great maſter of temper was angry: And angry at his laſt hour; and angry with his friend; and angry for what deſerved acknowledgment; angry, for a right and tender inſtance of true friendſhip towards him. Is not this ſurpriſing? What could be the cauſe? The cauſe was for his honour; 'twas a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious, regard for immortality: For his friend aſking him, with ſuch an affectionate concern as became a friend, "Where he ſhould depoſit his remains?" it was reſented by Socrates, as implying a diſhonourable ſuppoſition, that he could be ſo mean, as to have regard for any thing, even in himſelf, that was not IMMORTAL.

This fact well conſidered, would make our infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates; or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illuſtrious example, to ſhare his glory: And, conſequently, it would incline them to peruſe the following pages

with candour and impartiality: Which is all I desire; and that for their sakes: For I am persuaded, that an unprejudiced infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7. 1744.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT THE SEVENTH.

HEAV'N gives the needful, but neglected, call.
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,
To wake the ſoul to ſenſe of future ſcenes?
Deaths ſtand, like Mercurys, in ev'ry way;
And kindly point us to our journey's end.
Pope, who could'ſt make immortals! art thou dead?
I give thee joy: Nor will I take my leave;
So ſoon to follow. Man but dives in death;
Dives from the ſun, in fairer day to riſe;
The grave, his ſubterranean road to bliſs.
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it ſo;
Thro' various parts our glorious ſtory runs;
Time gives the preface, endleſs age unrolls
The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.
This, earth and ſkies * already have proclaim'd.
The world's a prophecy of worlds to come;

* Night the Sixth.

And who, what GOD foretells (who ſpeaks in things,
Still louder than in words) ſhall dare deny?
If nature's arguments appear too weak,
Turn a new leaf, and ſtronger read in man.
If man ſleeps on, untaught by what he ſees,
Can he prove infidel to what he feels?
He, whoſe blind thought futurity denies,
Unconſcious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,
His own indictment; he condemns himſelf;
Who reads his boſom, reads immortal life;
Or, nature, there, impoſing on her ſons,
Has written fables; man was made a lie.
Why diſcontent for ever harbour'd there?
Incurable conſumption of our peace!
Reſolve me, why, the cottager, and king,
He whom ſea-ſever'd realms obey, and he
Who ſteals his whole dominion from the waſte,
Repelling winter blaſts with mud and ſtraw,
Diſquieted alike, draw ſigh for ſigh,
In fate ſo diſtant, in complaint ſo near?
Is it, that things terreſtrial can't content?
Deep in rich paſture, will thy flocks complain?
Not ſo; but to their maſter is deny'd
To ſhare their ſweet ſerene. Man, ill at eaſe,
In this, not his own place, this foreign field,
Where nature fodders him with other food,
Than was ordain'd his cravings to ſuffice,
Poor in abundance, famiſh'd at a feaſt,
Sighs on for ſomething more, when moſt enjoy'd.
Is heav'n then kinder to thy flocks, than thee?
Not ſo; thy paſture richer, but remote;
In part, remote; for that remoter part

Man bleats from inſtinct, tho', perhaps, debauch'd
By ſenſe, his reaſon ſleeps, nor dreams the cauſe.
The cauſe how obvious, when his reaſon wakes!
His grief is but his grandeur in diſguiſe;
And diſcontent is immortality.
Shall ſons of aether, ſhall the blood of heav'n,
Set up their hopes on earth, and ſtable here,
With brutal acquieſcence in the mire?
Lorenzo! no! they ſhall be nobly pain'd;
The glorious foreigners, diſtreſt, ſhall ſigh
On thrones; and thou congratulate the ſigh:
Man's miſery declares him born for bliſs;
His anxious heart aſſerts the truth I ſing,
And gives the ſceptic in his head the lye.
Our heads, our hearts, our paſſions, and our pow'rs,
Speak the ſame language; call us to the ſkies;
Unripen'd theſe, in this inclement clime,
Scarce riſe above conjecture, and miſtake;
And for this land of trifles thoſe too ſtrong
Tumultuous riſe, and tempeſt human life;
What prize on earth can pay us for the ſtorm?
Meet objects for our paſſions heav'n ordain'd,
Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
No fault, but in defect: Bleſt heav'n! avert
A bounded ardor for unbounded bliſs;
O for a bliſs unbounded! far beneath
A ſoul immortal, is a mortal joy.
Nor are our pow'rs to periſh immature;
But, after feeble effort here, beneath
A brighter ſun, and in a nobler ſoil,
Tranſplanted from this ſublunary bed,
Shall flouriſh fair, and put forth all their bloom.

Reaſon progreſſive, inſtinct is complete;
Swift inſtinct leaps; ſlow reaſon feebly climbs.
Brutes ſoon their zenith reach; their little all
Flows in at once; in ages they no more
Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy.
Were man to live coeval with the ſun,
The patriarch-pupil would be learning ſtill!
Yet, dying, leave his leſſon half-unlearnt.
Men periſh in advance, as if the ſun
Should ſet ere noon, in eaſtern oceans drown'd;
If fit, with dim, illuſtrious to compare,
The ſun's meridian, with the ſoul of man.
To man, why, ſtepdame nature! ſo ſevere?
Why thrown aſide thy maſter-piece half-wrought,
While meaner efforts thy laſt hand enjoy;
Or, if abortively poor man muſt die,
Nor reach, what reach he might, why die in dread?
Why curſt with foreſight? wiſe to miſery?
Why of his proud prerogative the prey?
Why leſs pre-eminent in rank, than pain?
His immortality alone can tell;
Full ample fund to balance all amiſs,
And turn the ſcale in favour of the juſt!
His immortality alone can ſolve
That darkeſt of enigmas, human hope;
Of all the darkeſt, if at death we die.
Hope, eager hope, th' aſſaſſin of our joy,
All preſent bleſſings treading under foot,
Is ſcarce a milder tyrant than deſpair.
With no paſt toils content, ſtill planning new,
Hope turns us o'er to death alone for eaſe.
Poſſeſſion, why, more taſteleſs than purſuit?

Why is a wiſh far dearer than a crown?
That wiſh accompliſh'd, why, the grave of bliſs?
Becauſe, in the great future bury'd deep,
Beyond our plans of empire, and renown,
Lies all that man with ardor ſhould purſue;
And he who made him, bent him to the right.
Man's heart th' ALMIGHTY to the future ſets,
By ſecret, and inviolable ſprings;
And makes his hope his ſublunary joy:
Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry ſtill.
"More, more!" the glutton cries: For ſomething new
So rages appetite, if man can't mount,
He will deſcend. He ſtarves on the poſſeſt.
Hence the world's maſter, from ambition's ſpire,
In Caprea plung'd; and div'd beneath the brute.
In that rank ſty why wallow'd empire's ſon
Supreme? becauſe he could no higher fly;
His riot was ambition in deſpair.
Old Rome conſulted birds, Lorenzo! thou
With more ſucceſs, the flight of hope ſurvey;
Of reſtleſs hope, for ever on the wing.
High-perch'd o'er ev'ry thought that falcon ſits,
To fly at all that riſes in her ſight;
And, never ſtooping, but to mount again
Next moment, ſhe betrays her aim's miſtake,
And owns her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.
There ſhould it fail us (it muſt fail us there,
If being fails) more mournful riddles riſe,
And virtue vies with hope in myſtery.
Why virtue? where its praiſe, its being, fled?
Virtue is true ſelf-intereſt purſu'd:
What true ſelf-intereſt of quite-mortal man?

To close with all that makes him happy here.
If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,
Then vice is virtue; 'tis our sov'reign good.
In self-applause is virtue's golden prize;
No self-applause attends it on thy scheme:
Whence self-applause? from conscience of the right.
And what is right, but means of happiness?
No means of happiness when virtue yields;
That basis failing, falls the building too,
And lay in ruins ev'ry virtuous joy.
The rigid guardian of a blameless heart,
So long rever'd, so long reputed wife,
Is weak; with rank knight-errantries o'er-run.
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams
Of self-exposure, laudable, and great?
Of gallant enterprize, and glorious death?
Die for thy country?—thou romantic fool!
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink:
Thy country? what to thee?—the God-head; what?
(I speak with awe!) tho' he should bid thee bleed?
If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt,
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow,
Be deaf; preserve thy being; disobey.
Nor is it disobedience: Know, Lorenzo!
Whate'er the Almighty's subsequent command,
His first command is this:—"Man, love thyself."
In this alone free-agents are not free.
Existence is the basis, bliss the prize:
If virtue costs existence, 'tis a crime;
Bold violation of our law supreme,
Black suicide; tho' nations, which consult
Their gain, at thy expence, resound applause.

Since virtue's recompenſe is doubtful, here,
If man dies wholly, well may we demand,
Why is man ſuffer'd to be good in vain?
Why to be good in vain, is man enjoin'd?
Why to be good in vain, is man betray'd?
Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breaſt,
By ſweet complacencies from virtue felt?
Why whiſpers nature lyes on virtue's part?
Or if blind inſtinct (which aſſumes the name
Of ſacred conſcience) plays the fool in man,
Why reaſon made accomplice in the cheat?
Why are the wiſeſt loudeſt in her praiſe?
Can man by reaſon's beam be led aſtray?
Or, at his peril, imitate his God?
Since virtue ſometimes ruins us on earth,
Or both are true; or, man ſurvives the grave.
Or man ſurvives the grave, or own, Lorenzo,
Thy boaſt ſupreme, a wild abſurdity.
Dauntleſs thy ſpirit; cowards are thy ſcorn.
Grant man immortal, and thy ſcorn is juſt.
The man immortal, rationally brave,
Dares ruſh on death—becauſe he cannot die.
But if man loſes all, when life is loſt,
He lives a coward, or a fool expires.
A daring infidel (and ſuch there are,
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
Of pure heroical defect of thought)
Of all earth's madmen, moſt deſerves a chain.
When to the grave we follow the renown'd
For valour, virtue, ſcience, all we love,
And all we praiſe; for worth, whoſe noon-tide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher ſtile,

Mends our ideas of aetherial pow'rs;
Dream we, that luſtre of the moral world
Goes out in ſtench, and rotteneſs the cloſe?
Why was he wiſe to know, and warm to praiſe,
And ſtrenuous to tranſcribe, in human life,
The mind ALMIGHTY? Could it be, that fate,
Juſt when the lineaments began to ſhine,
And dawn the DEITY, ſhould ſnatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out, and give
The ſkies alarm, leſt angels too might die?
If human ſouls, why not angelic too
Extinguiſh'd? and a ſolitary GOD,
O'er ghaſtly ruin, frowning from his throne?
Shall we, this moment, gaze on GOD in man?
The next, loſe man for ever in the duſt?
From duſt we diſengage, or man miſtakes;
And there, where leaſt his judgment fears a flaw.
Wiſdom and worth, how boldly he commends!
Wiſdom and worth, are ſacred names; rever'd,
Where not embrac'd; applauded! deify'd!
Why not compaſſion'd too? If ſpirits die,
Both are calamities, inflicted both,
To make us but more wretched: Wiſdom's eye
Acute, for what? to ſpy more miſeries;
And worth, ſo recompens'd, new-points their ſtings.
Or man ſurmounts the grave, or gain is loſs,
And worth exalted humbles us the more.
Thou wilt not patronize a ſcheme that makes
Weakneſs, and vice, the refuge of mankind.
"Has virtue, then, no joys?"—yes, joys dear-bought.
Talk ne'er ſo long, in this imperfect ſtate,

Virtue, and vice, are at eternal war.
Virtue's a combat; and who fights for nought?
Or for precarious, or for ſmall reward?
Who virtue's ſelf-reward ſo loud reſound,
Would take degrees angelic here below,
And virtue, while they compliment, betray,
By feeble motives, and unfaithful guards;
The crown, th' unfading crown, her ſoul inſpires:
'Tis that, and that alone, can countervail
The body's treach'ries, and the world's aſſaults;
On earth's poor pay our famiſh'd virtue dies.
Truth inconteſtible! in ſpite of all
A BAYLE has preach'd, or a V——E believ'd.
In man the more we dive, the more we ſee
Heav'n's ſignet ſtamping an immortal make.
Dive to the bottom of his ſoul, the baſe
Suſtaining all; what find we? knowledge, love.
As light, and heat, eſſential to the ſun,
Theſe to the ſoul. And why, if ſouls expire?
How little lovely here? how little known?
Small knowledge we dig up with endleſs toil;
And love unfeign'd may purchaſe perfect hate.
Why ſtarv'd, on earth, our angel-appetites;
While brutal are indulg'd their fulſome fill?
Were then capacities divine conferr'd,
As a mock diadem, in ſavage ſport,
Rank inſult of our pompous poverty,
Which reaps but pain, from ſeeming claims ſo fair?
In future age lies no redreſs? and ſhuts
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If ſo, for what ſtrange ends were mortals made!
The worſt to wallow, and the beſt to weep;

The man who merits moſt, muſt moſt complain:
Can we conceive a diſregard in heav'n,
What the worſt perpetrate, or beſt endure?
  This cannot be. To love, and know, in man
Is boundleſs appetite, and boundleſs pow'r;
And theſe demonſtrate boundleſs objects too.
Objects, pow'rs, appetites, heav'n ſuits in all;
Nor, nature thro', e'er violates this ſweet,
Eternal concord, on her tuneful ſtring.
Is man the ſole exception from her laws?
Eternity ſtruck off from human hope,
(I ſpeak with truth, but veneration too)
Man is a monſter, the reproach of heav'n,
A ſtain, a dark impenetrable cloud
On nature's beauteous aſpect; and deforms,
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.
If ſuch is man's allotment, what is heav'n?
Or own the ſoul immortal, or blaſpheme.
  Or own the ſoul immortal, or invert
All order. Go, mock-majeſty! go, man!
And bow to thy ſuperiors of the ſtall;
Thro' ev'ry ſcene of ſenſe ſuperior far!
They graze the turff untill'd; they drink the ſtream
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unembitter'd
With doubts, fears, fruitleſs hopes, regrets, deſpairs;
Mankind's peculiar! reaſon's precious dower!
No foreign clime they ranſack for their robes;
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar:
Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd;
They find a paradiſe in ev'ry field,
On boughs forbidden where no curſes hang:
Their ill, no more than ſtrikes the ſenſe; unſtretch'd

By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:
When the worſt comes, it comes unfeard; one ſtroke
Begins, and ends, their woe: They die but once;
Bleſt, incommunicable privilege! for which
Proud man, who rules the globe, and reads the ſtars,
Philoſopher, or hero, ſighs in vain.
Account for this prerogative in brutes.
No day, no glimpſe of day, to ſolve the knot,
But what beams on it from eternity.
O ſole and ſweet ſolution! that unties
The difficult, and ſoftens the ſevere;
The cloud on nature's beauteous face diſpels;
Reſtores bright order; caſts the brute beneath;
And re-inthrones us in ſupremacy
Of joy, ev'n here: Admit immortal life,
And virtue is knight-errantry no more;
Each virtue brings in hand a golden dower,
Far richer in reverſion: Hope exults;
And tho' much bitter in our cup is thrown,
Predominates, and gives the taſte of heav'n.
O wherefore is the DEITY ſo kind?
Aſtoniſhing beyond aſtoniſhment!
Heav'n our reward——for heav'n enjoy'd below.
Still unſubdu'd thy ſtubborn heart?—For there
The traitor lurks, who doubts the truth I ſing.
Reaſon is guiltleſs; will alone rebels.
What, in that ſtubborn heart, if I ſhould find
New, unexpected witneſſes againſt thee?
Ambition, pleaſure, and the love of gain!
Canſt thou ſuſpect, that theſe, which make the ſoul
The ſlave of earth, ſhould own her heir of heav'n?

Canſt thou ſuſpect what makes us diſbelieve
Our immortality, ſhould prove it ſure?
First, then, ambition ſummon to the bar.
Ambition's ſhame, extravagance, diſguſt,
And inextinguiſhable nature, ſpeak.
Each much depoſes; hear them in their turn.
Thy ſoul, how paſſionately fond of fame!
How anxious that fond paſſion to conceal!
We bluſh, detected in deſigns on praiſe,
Though for beſt deeds, and from the beſt of men;
And why? becauſe immortal. Art divine
Has made the body tutor to the ſoul;
Heav'n kindly gives our blood a moral flow;
Bids it aſcend the glowing cheek, and there
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,
Which ſtoops to court a character from man;
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, ſit
Far more than man, with endleſs praiſe, and blame.
Ambition's boundleſs appetite out-ſpeaks
The verdict of its ſhame. When ſouls take fire
At high preſumptions of their own deſert,
One age is poor applauſe; the mighty ſhout,
The thunder by the living few begun,
Late time muſt echo; worlds unborn, reſound!
We wiſh our names eternally to live:
Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human thought,
Had not our natures been eternal too.
Inſtinct points out an int'reſt in hereafter;
But our blind reaſon ſees not where it lies;
Or, ſeeing, gives the ſubſtance for the ſhade.
Fame is the ſhade of immortality,
And in itſelf a ſhadow. Soon as caught,

Contemn'd; it ſhrinks to nothing in the graſp.
Conſult th' ambitious, 'tis ambition's cure.
" And is this all ?" cry'd Caeſar at his height,
Diſguſted. This third proof ambition brings
Of immortality. The firſt in fame,
Obſerve him near, your envy will abate:
Sham'd at the diſproportion vaſt, between
The paſſion, and the purchaſe, he will ſigh
At ſuch ſucceſs, and bluſh at his renown.
And why? becauſe far richer prize invites
His heart; far more illuſtrious glory calls;
It calls in whiſpers, yet the deafeſt hear.
And can ambition a fourth proof ſupply?
It can, and ſtronger than the former three;
Yet quite o'erlook'd by ſome reputed wiſe.
Though diſappointments in ambition pain,
And though ſucceſs diſguſts, yet ſtill, Lorenzo!
In vain we ſtrive to pluck it from our hearts;
By nature planted for the nobleſt ends.
Abſurd the fam'd advice to Pyrrhus giv'n,
More prais'd, than ponder'd; ſpecious, but unſound:
Sooner that hero's ſword the world had quell'd,
Than reaſon, his ambition. Man muſt ſoar.
An obſtinate activity within,
An inſuppreſſive ſpring, will toſs him up
In ſpite of fortune's load. Not kings alone,
Each villager has his ambition too;
No Sultan prouder than his fetter'd ſlave:
Slaves build their little Babylons of ſtraw,
Echo the proud Aſſyrian, in their hearts,
And cry,—" Behold the wonders of my might!"
And why? becauſe immortal as their lord;

And ſouls immortal muſt for ever heave
At ſomething great, the glitter, or the gold;
The praiſe of mortals, or the praiſe of heav'n.
Nor abſolutely vain is human praiſe,
When human is ſupported by divine.
I'll introduce Lorenzo to himſelf:
Pleaſure and pride (bad maſters!) ſhare our hearts.
As love of pleaſure is ordain'd to guard
And feed our bodies, and extend our race;
The love of praiſe is planted to protect,
And propagate the glories of the mind.
What is it, but the love of praiſe, inſpires,
Matures, refines, embelliſhes, exalts,
Earth's happineſs? from that, the delicate,
The grand, the marvellous, of civil life,
Want and convenience, under-workers, lay
The baſis, on which love of glory builds.
Nor is thy life, O Virtue! leſs in debt
To praiſe, thy ſecret-ſtimulating friend.
Were men not proud, what merit ſhould we miſs!
Pride made the virtues of the pagan world.
Praiſe is the ſalt that ſeaſons right to man,
And whets his appetite for moral good.
Thirſt of applauſe is virtue's ſecond guard;
Reaſon, her firſt; but reaſon wants an aid;
Our private reaſon is a flatterer;
Thirſt of applauſe calls public judgment in,
To poiſe our own, to keep an even ſcale,
And give endanger'd virtue fairer play.
Here a fifth proof ariſes, ſtronger ſtill:
Why this ſo nice conſtruction of our hearts?
Theſe delicate moralities of ſenſe;

This conſtitutional reſerve of aid
To ſuccour virtue, when our reaſon fails;
If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
And, oft, the mark of injuries on earth,
When labour'd to maturity (its bill
Of diſciplines, and pains, unpaid) muſt die?
Why freighted rich, to daſh againſt a rock?
Were man to periſh when moſt fit to live,
O how miſ-ſpent were all theſe ſtratagems,
By ſkill divine inwoven in our frame!
Where are heav'n's holineſs and mercy fled?
Laughs heav'n, at once, at virtue, and at man?
If not, why that diſcourag'd, this deſtroy'd?
Thus far ambition. What ſays avarice?
This her chief maxim, which has long been thine:
"The wiſe and wealthy are the ſame."—I grant it.
To ſtore up treaſure, with inceſſant toil,
This is man's province, this his higheſt praiſe.
To this great end keen inſtinct ſtings him on.
To guide that inſtinct, reaſon! is thy charge;
'Tis thine to tell us where true treaſure lies:
But, reaſon failing to diſcharge her truſt,
Or to the deaf diſcharging it in vain,
A blunder follows; and blind induſtry,
Gall'd by the ſpur, but ſtranger to the courſe,
(The courſe where ſtakes of more than gold are won)
O'erloading, with the cares of diſtant age,
The jaded ſpirits of the preſent hour,
Provides for an eternity below.
"Thou ſhalt not covet," is a wiſe command;
But bounded to the wealth the ſun ſurveys:
Look farther, the command ſtands quite revers'd,

And av'rice is a virtue moſt divine.
Is faith a refuge for our happineſs?
Moſt ſure: And is it not for reaſon too?
Nothing this world unriddles, but the next.
Whence inextinguiſhable thirſt of gain?
From inextinguiſhable life in man:
Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the ſkies,
Had wanted wing to fly ſo far in guilt.
Sour grapes, I grant, ambition, avarice:
Yet ſtill their root is immortality.
Theſe its wild growths ſo bitter, and ſo baſe,
(Pain and reproach!) religion can reclaim,
Refine, exalt, throw down their pois'nous lee,
And make them ſparkle in the bowl of bliſs.

See, the third witneſs laughs at bliſs remote,
And falſely promiſes an Eden here:
Truth ſhe ſhall ſpeak for once, though prone to lye;
A common cheat, and Pleaſure is her name.
To pleaſure never was Lorenzo deaf;
Then hear her now, now firſt thy real friend.

Since nature made us not more fond than proud
Of happineſs (whence hypocrites in joy!
Makers of mirth! artificers of ſmiles!)
Why ſhould the joy moſt poignant ſenſe affords,
Burn us with bluſhes, and rebuke our pride?—
Thoſe heav'n-born bluſhes tell us man deſcends,
Ev'n in the zenith of his earthly bliſs:
Should reaſon take her infidel repoſe,
This honeſt inſtinct ſpeaks our lineage high;
This inſtinct calls on darkneſs to conceal
Our rapturous relation to the ſtalls.
Our glory covers us with noble ſhame,

And he that's unconfounded, is unmann'd.
The man that bluſhes, is not quite a brute.
Thus far with thee, Lorenzo! will I cloſe;
Pleaſure is good, and man for pleaſure made;
But pleaſure full of glory, as of joy;
Pleaſure, which neither bluſhes, nor expires.
The witneſſes are heard; the cauſe is o'er;
Let conſcience file the ſentence in her court,
Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey:
Thus, ſeal'd by truth, th' authentic record runs.
'Know, all; know, infidels,—unapt to know!
'Tis immortality your nature ſolves;
'Tis immortality decyphers man,
'And opens all the myſt'ries of his make.
'Without it, half his inſtincts are a riddle;
'Without it, all his virtues are a dream.
'His very crimes atteſt his dignity;
'His fateleſs thirſt of pleaſure, gold, and fame,
'Declares him born for bleſſings infinite:
'What leſs than infinite, makes un-abſurd
'Paſſions, which all on earth but more inflames?'
'Fierce paſſions, ſo mis-meaſur'd to this ſcene,
'Stretch'd out, like eagles wings, beyond our neſt,
'Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
'For earth too large, preſage a nobler flight,
'And evidence our title to the ſkies.'
Ye gentle theologues, of calmer kind!
Whoſe conſtitution dictates to your pen,
Who, cold yourſelves, think ardor comes from hell!
Think not our paſſions from corruption ſprung,
Though to corruption now they lend their wings;
That is their miſtreſs, not their mother. All

(And juſtly) reaſon deem divine: I ſee,
I feel a grandeur in the paſſions too,
Which ſpeaks their high deſcent, and glorious end;
Which ſpeaks them rays of an eternal fire.
In paradiſe itſelf they burnt as ſtrong,
Ere Adam fell; tho' wiſer in their aim.
Like the proud eaſtern, ſtruck by Providence,
What tho' our paſſions are run mad, and ſtoop
With low, terreſtrial appetite, to graze
On traſh, on toys, dethron'd from high deſire?
Yet ſtill, thro' their diſgrace, a feeble ray
Of greatneſs ſhines, and tells us whence they fell:
But theſe (like that fallen monarch when reclaim'd)
When reaſon moderates the reign aright,
Shall re-aſcend, re-mount their former ſphere,
Where once they ſoar'd illuſtrious; ere ſeduc'd
By wanton Eve's debauch, to ſtroll on earth,
And ſet the ſublunary world on fire.
But grant their phrenzy laſts; their phrenzy fails
To diſappoint one providential end,
For which heav'n blew up ardor in our hearts:
Were reaſon ſilent, boundleſs paſſion ſpeaks
A future ſcene of boundleſs objects too,
And brings glad tidings of eternal day.
Eternal day! 'tis that enlightens all;
And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it ſure.
Conſider man as an immortal being,
Intelligible all; and all is great;
A cryſtalline tranſparency prevails,
And ſtrikes full luſtre, thro' the human ſphere:
Conſider man as mortal, all is dark,
And wretched; reaſon weeps at the ſurvey.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, 'and let her weep,
'Weak, modern reaſon: Antient times were wiſe.
'Authority, that venerable guide,
'Stands on my part; the fam'd Athenian porch
'(And who for wiſdom ſo renown'd as they?
'Deny'd this immortality to man.'
I grant it; but affirm, they prov'd it too.
A riddle this!—have patience; I'll explain.
What noble vanities, what moral flights,
Glitt'ring thro' their romantic wiſdom's page,
Make us, at once, deſpiſe them, and admire?
Fable is flat to theſe high-ſeaſon'd fires;
They leave th' extravagance of ſong below.
'Fleſh ſhall not feel; or, feeling, ſhall enjoy
'The dagger, or the rack; to them, alike
'A bed of roſes, or the burning bull.'
In men exploding all beyond the grave,
Strange doctrine, this! As doctrine, it was ſtrange;
But not, as prophecy; for ſuch it prov'd,
And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd:
They feign'd a firmneſs Chriſtians need not feign.
The Chriſtian truly triumph'd in the flame:
The Stoic ſaw, in double wonder loſt,
Wonder at them, and wonder at himſelf,
To find the bold adventures of his thought
Not bold, and that he ſtrove to lye in vain.
Whence, then, thoſe thoughts? thoſe tow'ring thoughts, that flew
Such monſtrous heights!—From inſtinct, and from pride.
The glorious inſtinct of a deathleſs ſoul,
Confus'dly conſcious of her dignity,

Suggeſted truths they could not underſtand.
In luſt's dominion, and in paſſion's ſtorm,
Truth's ſyſtem broken, ſcatter'd fragments lay,
As light in chaos, glimm'ring through the gloom:
Smit with the pomp of lofty ſentiments,
Pleas'd pride proclaim'd, what reaſon diſbeliev'd.
Pride, like the Delphic prieſteſs, with a ſwell,
Rav'd nonſenſe, deſtin'd to be future ſenſe,
When life immortal, in full day, ſhould ſhine;
And death's dark ſhadows fly the goſpel-ſun.
They ſpoke, what nothing but immortal ſouls
Could ſpeak; and thus the truth they queſtion'd, prov'd.
Can then abſurdities, as well as crimes,
Speak man immortal? all things ſpeak him ſo.
Much has been urg'd; and doſt thou call for more?
Call; and with endleſs queſtions be diſtreſs'd,
All unreſolvable, if earth is all.

'Why life, a moment; infinite, deſire?
'Our wiſh, eternity? our home, the grave?
'Heav'n's promiſe dormant lies in human hope.
'Who wiſhes life immortal, proves it too
'Why happineſs purſu'd, though never found?
'Man's thirſt of happineſs declares it is,
'(For nature never gravitates to nought;)
'That thirſt unquench'd declares it is not here.
'My Lucia, thy Clariſſa, call to thought;
'Why cordial friendſhip riveted ſo deep,
'As hearts to pierce at firſt, at parting, rend,
'If friend, and friendſhip, vaniſh in an hour?
'Is not this torment in the maſk of joy?
'Why by reflection marr'd the joys of ſenſe?

" Why paſt, and future, preying on our hearts?
" And putting all our preſent joys to death?
" Why labours reaſon? inſtinct were as well;
" Inſtinct far better; what can chuſe, can err:
" O how infallible the thoughtleſs brute!
" 'Twere well his Holineſs were half as ſure.
" Reaſon with inclination, why at war?
" Why ſenſe of guilt? Why conſcience up in arms?"
Conſcience of guilt, is prophecy of pain,
And boſom-counſel to decline the blow.
Reaſon with inclination ne'er had jarr'd,
If nothing future paid forbearance here.
Thus on—theſe, and a thouſand pleas uncall'd,
All promiſe, ſome enſure a ſecond ſcene;
Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far
Than all things elſe moſt certain; were it falſe,
What truth on earth ſo precious as the lye?
This world it gives us, let what will enſue;
This world it gives, in that high cordial, hope:
The future of the preſent is the ſoul:
How this life groans, when ſever'd from the next?
Poor, mutilated wretch, that diſbelieves!
By dark diſtruſt, his being cut in two,
In both parts periſhes; life void of joy,
Sad prelude of eternity in pain!
Couldſt thou perſuade me, the next life could fail
Our ardent wiſhes; how ſhould I pour out
My bleeding heart in anguiſh, new, as deep!
Oh! with what thoughts, thy hope, and my deſpair,
Abhorr'd ANNIHILATION! blaſts the ſoul,
And wide-extends the bounds of human woe!

Could I believe Lorenzo's ſyſtem true,
In this black channel would my ravings run.
' Grief from the future borrow'd peace, ere-while.
' The future vaniſh'd! and the preſent pain'd!
' Strange import of unprecedented ill!
' Fall, how profound! like Lucifer's, the fall!
' Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!
' From where fond hope built her pavilion high,
' The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once
' To night! to nothing! darker ſtill than night.
' If 'twas a dream, why wake me, my worſt foe,
' Lorenzo! boaſtful of the name of friend!
' O for deluſion! O for error ſtill!
' Could vengeance ſtrike much ſtronger than to plant
' A thinking being in a world like this,
' Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite;
' More curs'd than at the fall?—The ſun goes out!
' The thorns ſhoot up! what thorns in ev'ry thought?
' Why ſenſe of better? it imbitters worſe.
' Why ſenſe? why life? if but to ſigh, then ſink
' To what I was! twice nothing! and much woe!
' Woe, from heav'n's bounties! woe, from what was wont
' To flatter moſt, high intellectual pow'rs.
' Thought, virtue, knowledge! bleſſings, by thy ſcheme,
' All poiſon'd into pains. Firſt, knowledge, once
' My ſoul's ambition, now her greateſt dread.
' To know myſelf, true wiſdom?—No, to ſhun
' That ſhocking ſcience, parent of deſpair!
' Avert thy mirror: If I ſee, I die.

'Know my Creator? climb his bleſs'd abode
'By painful ſpeculation, pierce the vale,
'Dive in his nature, read his attributes,
'And gaze in admiration—on a foe,
'Obtruding life, with-holding happineſs!
'From the full rivers that ſurround his throne,
'Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;
'Man gaſping for one drop, that he might ceaſe
'To curſe his birth, nor envy reptiles more!
'Ye ſable clouds! ye darkeſt ſhades of night!
'Hide him, for ever hide him, from my thought,
'Once all my comfort; ſource, and ſoul of joy!
'Now leagu'd with furies, and * with thee, againſt me.
'Know his atchievements? ſtudy his renown?
'Contemplate this amazing univerſe,
'Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete!
'For what? 'mid miracles of nobler name,
'To find one miracle of miſery?
'To find the being, which alone can know
'And praiſe his works, a blemiſh on his praiſe?
'Thro' nature's ample range, in thought, to ſtroll,
'And ſtart at man, the ſingle mourner there,
'Breathing high hope! chain'd down to pangs, and death!
'Knowing is ſuff'ring: And ſhall virtue ſhare
'The ſigh of knowledge?——virtue ſhares the ſigh.
'By ſtraining up the ſteep of excellent,
'By battles fought, and, from temptation, won,
'What gains ſhe, but the pang of ſeeing worth,
'Angelic worth, ſoon ſhuffled in the dark
'With ev'ry vice, and ſwept to brutal duſt?
'Merit is madneſs; virtue is a crime;

* Lorenzo.

'A crime to reaſon, if it coſts us pain
'Unpaid: What pain, amidſt a thouſand more,
'To think the moſt abandon'd, after days
'Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death
'As ſoft a pillow, nor make fouler clay!
'Duty! religion!——theſe, our duty done,
'Imply reward. Religion is miſtake.
'Duty!——there's none, but to repel the cheat.
'Ye cheats! away! ye daughters of my pride!
'Who feign yourſelves the fav'rites of the ſkies:
'Ye tow'ring hopes! abortive energies!
'That toſs, and ſtruggle, in my lying breaſt,
'To ſcale the ſkies, and build preſumptions there,
'As I were heir of an eternity
'Vain, vain ambitions! trouble me no more.
'Why travel far in queſt of ſure defeat?
'As bounded as my being, be my wiſh.
'All is inverted, wiſdom is a fool.
'Senſe! take the rein; blind paſſion! drive us on;
'And, ignorance! befriend us on our way;
'Ye new, but trueſt patrons of our peace!
'Yes; give the pulſe full empire; live the brute,
'Since, as the brute, we die. The ſum of man,
'Of godlike man! to revel, and to rot.
'But not on equal terms with other brutes:
'Their revels a more poignant reliſh yield,
'And ſafer too; they never poiſons chuſe;
'Inſtinct, than reaſon, makes more wholeſome meals,
'And ſends all marring murmur far away.
'For ſenſual life they beſt philoſophize;
'Theirs, that ſerene, the ſages ſought in vain:
'''Tis man alone expoſtulates with heav'n;

'His, all the pow'r, and all the cauſe, to mourn.
'Shall human eyes alone diſſolve in tears?
'And bleed, in anguiſh, none but human hearts?
'The wide-ſtretch'd realm of intellectual woe,
'Surpaſſing ſenſual far, is all our own.
'In life ſo fatally diſtinguiſh'd, why
'Caſt in one lot, confounded, lump'd, in death?
'Ere yet in being, was mankind in guilt?
'Why thunder'd this peculiar clauſe againſt us,
'All-mortal, and all-wretched!——Have the ſkies
'Reaſons of ſtate, their ſubjects may not ſcan,
'Nor humbly reaſon, when they ſorely ſigh?
'All-mortal, and all-wretched!——'tis too much;
'Unparallel'd in nature: 'Tis too much
'On being unrequeſted at thy hands,
'Omnipotent! for I ſee nought but pow'r.
'And why ſee that? why thought? to toil, and eat,
'Then make our bed in darkneſs, needs no thought.
'What ſuperfluities are reas'ning ſouls!
'Oh give eternity! or thought deſtroy.
'But without thought our curſe were half unfelt;
'Its blunted edge would ſpare the throbbing heart;
'And, therefore, 'tis beſtow'd. I thank thee, reaſon!
'For aiding life's too ſmall calamities,
'And giving being to the dread of death.
'Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much
'For me, to treſpaſs on the brutal rights?
'Too much for heav'n to make one emmet more?
'Too much for chaos to permit my maſs
'A longer ſtay with eſſences unwrought,
'Unfaſhion'd, untormented into man?
'Wretched preferment to this round of pains!

'Wretched capacity of phrenzy, thought!
'Wretched capacity of dying, life!
'Life, thought, worth, wiſdom, all (O foul revolt!)
'Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.
'Death, then, has chang'd its nature too: O death!
'Come to my boſom, thou beſt gift of heav'n!
'Beſt friend of man! ſince man is man no more.
'Why in this thorny wilderneſs ſo long,
'Since there's no promis'd land's ambroſial bow'r,
'To pay me with its honey for my ſtings?
'If needful to the ſelfiſh ſchemes of heav'n
'To ſting us ſore, why mock'd our miſery?
'Why this ſo ſumptuous inſult o'er our heads?
'Why this illuſtrious canopy diſplay'd?
'Why ſo magnificently lodg'd deſpair?
'At ſtated periods, ſure-returning, roll
'Theſe glorious orbs, that mortals may compute
'Their length of labours, and of pains; nor loſe
'Their miſery's full meaſure?—Smiles with flow'rs,
'And fruits, promiſcuous, ever-teeming earth,
'That man may languiſh in luxurious ſcenes,
'And in an Eden mourn his wither'd joys?
'Claim earth and ſkies man's admiration, due
'For ſuch delights! Bleſs'd animals! too wiſe
'To wonder; and too happy to complain!
'Our doom decreed demands a mournful ſcene:
'Why not a dungeon dark, for the condemn'd?
'Why not the dragon's ſubterraneous den,
'For man to howl in? why not his abode
'Of the ſame diſmal colour with his fate?
'A Thebes, a Babylon, at vaſt expence
'Of time, toil, treaſure, art, for owls and adders,

'As congruous, as, for man, this lofty dome,
'Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high
desire;
'If, from her humble chamber in the duſt,
'While proud thought ſwells, and high deſire in
flames,
'The poor worm calls us for her inmates there;
'And, round us, death's inexorable hand
'Draws the dark curtain cloſe; undrawn no more.
'Undrawn no more!——behind the cloud of death,
'Once, I beheld a ſun; a ſun which gilt
'That ſable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold:
'How the grave's alter'd! fathomleſs, as hell!
'A real hell to thoſe who dream'd of heav'n.
'ANNIHILATION! how it yawns before me!
'Next moment I may drop from thought, from ſenſe,
'The privilege of angels, and of worms,
'An outcaſt from exiſtence! and this ſpirit,
'This all-pervading, this all-conſcious ſoul,
'This particle of energy divine,
'Which travels nature, flies from ſtar to ſtar,
'And viſits gods, and emulates their pow'rs,
'For ever is extinguiſh'd. Horror! death!
'Death of that death I fearleſs once ſurvey'd!—
'When horror univerſal ſhall deſcend,
'And heav'n's dark concave urn all human race,
'On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,
'How juſt this verſe! this monumental ſigh!

'Beneath the lumber of demoliſh'd worlds,
'Deep in the rubbiſh of the general wreck,
'Swept ignominious to the common maſs

'Of matter, never dignify'd with life,
'Here lie proud rationals; the ſons of heav'n!
'The lords of earth! the property of worms!
'Beings of yeſterday, and no to-morrow!
'Who liv'd in terror, and in pangs expir'd!
'All gone to rot in chaos; or, to make
'Their happy tranſit into blocks, or brutes,
'Nor longer fully their CREATOR's name.'

Lorenzo! hear, pauſe, ponder, and pronounce.
Juſt is this hiſtory? If ſuch is man,
Mankind's hiſtorian, tho' divine, might weep.
And dares Lorenzo ſmile!—I know thee proud;
For once let pride befriend thee; pride looks pale
At ſuch a ſcene, and ſighs for ſomething more.
Amidſt thy boaſts, preſumptions, and diſplays,
And art thou then a ſhadow? leſs than ſhade?
A nothing? leſs than nothing? to have been,
And not to be, is lower than unborn.
Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm
Thine equal? Runs thy taſte of pleaſure high?
Why patronize ſure death of ev'ry joy?
Charm riches? Why chuſe begg'ry in the grave,
Of ev'ry hope a bankrupt! and for ever?
Ambition, pleaſure, avarice, perſuade thee
To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,
They * lately prov'd, thy ſoul's ſupreme deſire.
What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?
Great nature's maſter-appetite deſtroy'd!
Is endleſs life, and happineſs, deſpis'd?

* In the Sixth Night.

Or both wiſh'd, here, where neither can be found?
Such man's perverſe, eternal war with heav'n!
Dar'ſt thou perſiſt? and is their nought on earth,
But a long train of tranſitory forms,
Riſing, and breaking, millions in an hour?
Bubbles of a fantaſtic deity, blown up
In ſport, and then in cruelty deſtroy'd?
Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!
Deſtroys thy ſcheme the whole of human race?
Kind is fell Lucifer, compar'd to thee:
Oh! ſpare this waſte of being half-divine;
And vindicate th' oeconomy of heav'n.
Heav'n is all love; all joy in giving joy:
It never had created, but to bleſs:
And ſhall it, then, ſtrike off the liſt of life,
A being bleſt, or worthy ſo to be?
Heav'n ſtarts at an annihilating GOD.
Is that, all nature ſtarts at, thy deſire?
Art ſuch a clod to wiſh thyſelf all clay?
What is that dreadful wiſh?—the dying groan
Of nature, murder'd by the blackeſt guilt.
What deadly poiſon has thy nature drank?
To nature undebauch'd no ſhock ſo great;
Nature's firſt wiſh is endleſs happineſs;
Annihilation is an after-thought,
A monſtrous wiſh, unborn till virtue dies.
And, oh! what depth of horror lies inclos'd!
For non-exiſtence no man ever wiſh'd,
But firſt, he wiſh'd the DEITY deſtroy'd.
If ſo; what words are dark enough to draw
Thy picture true? the darkeſt are too fair.
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour

Of deſperation, by what fury's aid,
In what infernal poſture of the ſoul,
All hell invited, and all hell in joy
At ſuch a birth, a birth ſo near of kin,
Did thy foul fancy whelp ſo black a ſcheme
Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,
And deities begun, reduc'd to duſt?
There's nought (thou ſay'ſt) but one eternal flux
Of feeble eſſences, tumultuous driven
Thro' time's rough billows into night's abyſs.
Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,
Is there no rock, on which man's toſſing thought
Can reſt from terror, dare his fate ſurvey,
And boldly think it ſomething to be born?
Amid ſuch hourly wrecks of being fair,
Is there no central, all-ſuſtaining baſe,
All-realizing, all-connecting pow'r,
Which, as it called forth all things, can recall,
And force deſtruction to refund her ſpoil?
Command the grave reſtore her taken prey?
Bid death's dark vale its human harveſt yield?
And earth, and ocean, pay their debt of man,
True to the grand depoſit truſted there?
Is there no potentate, whoſe out-ſtretch'd arm,
When rip'ning time calls forth the appointed hour,
Pluck'd from foul devaſtation's famiſh'd maw,
Binds preſent, paſt, and future, to his throne?
His throne, how glorious, thus divinely grac'd,
By germinating beings cluſt'ring round!
A garland worthy the Divinity!
A throne, by heav'n's omnipotence in ſmiles,

Built (like a Pharos tow'ring in the waves)
Amidſt immenſe effuſions of his love!
An ocean of communicated bliſs!
An all-prolific, all-preſerving GOD!
This were a GOD indeed ——And ſuch is man,
As here preſum'd: He riſes from his fall.
Think'ſt thou Omnipotence a naked root,
Each bloſſom fair of DEITY deſtroy'd?
Nothing is dead; nay, nothing ſleeps; each ſoul,
That ever animated human clay,
Now wakes; is on the wing: And where, O where,
Will the ſwarm ſettle?——When the trumpet's call,
As ſounding braſs, collects us, round heav'n's throne
Conglob'd, we baſk in everlaſting day,
(Paternal ſplendor!) and adhere for ever.
Had not the ſoul this outlet to the ſkies,
In this vaſt veſſel of the univerſe,
How ſhould we graſp, as in an empty void!
How in the pangs of famiſh'd hope expire!
How bright my proſpect ſhines! how gloomy thine!
A trembling world! and a devouring GOD!
Earth, but the ſhambles of Omnipotence!
Heav'n's face all ſtain'd with cauſeleſs maſſacres
Of countleſs millions, born to feel the pang
Of being loſt. Lorenzo! can it be?
This bids us ſhudder at the thoughts of life.
Who would be born to ſuch a phantom world,
Where nought ſubſtantial, but our miſery?
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our diſtreſs,
So ſoon to periſh, and revive no more?
The greater ſuch a joy, the more it pains.

A world, ſo far from great (and yet how great
It ſhines to thee!) there's nothing real in it;
Being, a ſhadow! conſciouſnets, a dream!
A dream, how dreadful! univerſal blank
Before it, and behind! poor man, a ſpark
From non-exiſtence ſtruck by wrath divine,
Glitt'ring a moment, nor that moment ſure,
'Midſt upper, nether, and ſurrounding night,
His ſad, ſure, ſudden, and eternal tomb!
Lorenzo! doſt thou feel theſe arguments?
Or is their nought but vengeance can be felt?
How haſt thou dar'd the DEITY dethrone?
How dar'd indict him of a world like this?
If ſuch the world, creation was a crime;
For what is crime, but cauſe of miſery?
Retract, blaſphemer! and unriddle this,
Of endleſs arguments, above, below,
Without us, and within, the ſhort reſult——
"If man's immortal, there's a GOD in heav'n."
But wherefore ſuch redundancy? ſuch waſte
Of argument? One ſets my ſoul at reſt;
One obvious, and at hand, and, Oh!—at heart.
So juſt the ſkies, Philander's life ſo pain'd,
His heart ſo pure; that, or ſucceeding ſcenes
Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born.
"What an old tale is this!" Lorenzo cries.——
I grant this argument is old; but truth
No years impair; and had not this been true,
Thou never hadſt deſpis'd it for its age.
Truth is immortal as thy ſoul; and fable
As fleeting as thy joys: Be wiſe, nor make

Heav'n's higheſt bleſſing, vengeance; O be wiſe!
Nor make a curſe of immortality.
Say, know'ſt thou what it is? or what thou art?
Know'ſt thou th' importance of a ſoul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory: Worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp! redouble this amaze;
Ten thouſand add; add twice ten thouſand more;
Then weigh the whole; one ſoul outweighs them all;
And calls th' aſtoniſhing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor.
For this, believe not me; no man believe;
Truſt not in words, but deeds; and deeds no leſs
Than thoſe of the Supreme; nor his, a few;
Conſult them all; conſulted, all proclaim
Thy ſoul's importance: Tremble at thyſelf;
For whom Omnipotence has wak'd ſo long:
Has wak'd, and work'd, for ages; from the birth
Of nature to this unbelieving hour.
In this ſmall province of his vaſt domain
(All nature bow, while I pronounce his name!)
What has God done, and not for this ſole end,
To reſcue ſouls from death? the ſoul's high price
Is writ in all the conduct of the ſkies.
The ſoul's high price is the creation's key,
Unlocks its myſteries, and naked lays
The genuine cauſe of ev'ry deed divine:
That, is the chain of ages, which maintains
Their obvious correſpondence, and unites
Moſt diſtant periods in one bleſt deſign:
That, is the mighty hinge, on which have turn'd
All revolutions, whether we regard

The natural, civil, or religious world;
The former two, but ſervants to the third:
To that their duty done, they both expire,
Their maſs new-caſt, forgot their deeds renown'd;
And angels aſk, 'Where once they ſhone ſo fair?'

To lift us from this abject, to ſublime;
This flux, to permanent; this dark, to day;
This foul, to pure; this turbid, to ſerene;
This mean, to mighty!—for this glorious end
Th' Almighty, riſing, his long ſabbath broke:
The world was made; was ruin'd; was reſtor'd;
Laws from the ſkies were publiſh'd; were repeal'd;
On earth kings, kingdoms, roſe; kings, kingdoms, fell;
Fam'd ſages lighted up the Pagan world;
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance
Thro' diſtant age; ſaints travell'd; martyrs bled;
By wonders ſacred nature ſtood controul'd;
The living were tranſlated; dead were rais'd;
Angels, and more than angels, came from heav'n;
And, oh! for this, deſcended lower ſtill;
Gilt was hell's gloom; aſtoniſh'd at his gueſt,
For one ſhort moment Lucifer ador'd:
Lorenzo! and wilt thou do leſs?——for this,
That hallow'd page, fools ſcoff at, was inſpir'd,
Of all theſe truths thrice-venerable code!
Deiſts! perform your quarantine; and then
Fall proſtrate, ere you touch it, leſt you die.

Nor leſs intenſely bent infernal powers
To mar, than thoſe of light, this end to gain.
O what a ſcene is here!——Lorenzo! wake;
Riſe to the thought; exert, expand thy ſoul
To take the vaſt idea: It denies

All elſe the name of great. Two warring worlds!
Not Europe againſt Afric; warring worlds,
Of more than mortal! mounted on the wing!
On ardent wings of energy, and zeal,
High-hov'ring o'er this little brand of ſtrife!
This ſublunary ball——but ſtrife, for what?
In their own cauſe conflicting? No; in thine,
In man's. His ſingle int'reſt blows the flame;
His the ſole ſtake; his fate the trumpet ſounds,
Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!
Tumultuous ſwarms of deities in arms!
Force, force oppoſing, till the waves run high,
And tempeſt nature's univerſal ſphere.
Such oppoſites eternal, ſtedfaſt, ſtern,
Such foes implacable, are good, and ill;
Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between
them.
Think not this fiction. 'There was war in heav'n.'
From heav'n's high cryſtal mountain, where it hung,
Th' Almighty's out-ſtrecht arm took down his bow,
And ſhot his indignation at the deep:
Re-thunder'd hell, and darted all her fires.—
And ſeems the ſtake of little moment ſtill?
And ſlumbers man, who ſingly caus'd the ſtorm?
He ſleeps.—And art thou ſhock'd at myſteries?
The greateſt, thou. How dreadful to reflect,
What ardor, care, and counſel, mortals cauſe
In breaſts divine! how little in their own!
Where-e'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me!
How happily this wond'rous view ſupports
My former argument! how ſtrongly ſtrikes
Immortal life's full demonſtration, here!

Why this exertion? why this ſtrange regard
From Heav'n's Omnipotent indulg'd to man?
Becauſe, in man, the glorious, dreadful pow'r,
Extremely to be pain'd, or bleſt, for ever.
Duration gives importance; ſwells the price.
An angel, if a creature of a day,
What would he be? A trifle of no weight;
Or ſtand, or fall; no matter which; he's gone.
Becauſe immortal, therefore is indulg'd
This ſtrange regard of deities to duſt.
Hence, heav'n looks down on earth with all her eyes:
Hence, the ſoul's mighty moment in her ſight:
Hence, ev'ry ſoul has partiſans above,
And ev'ry thought a critic in the ſkies:
Hence, clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,
And ev'ry guard a paſſion for his charge:
Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine
Has held high counſel o'er the fate of man.
Nor have the clouds thoſe gracious counſels hid.
Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
And Providence came forth to meet mankind:
In various modes of emphaſis and awe,
He ſpoke his will, and trembling nature heard;
He ſpoke it loud, in thunder, and in ſtorm.
Witneſs, thou Sinai! whoſe cloud-cover'd height,
And ſhaken baſis, own'd the preſent God:
Witneſs, ye billows! whoſe returning tide,
Breaking the chain that faſten'd it in air,
Swept Egypt, and her menaces, to hell:
Witneſs, ye flames! th' Aſſyrian tyrant blew
To ſev'nfold rage, as impotent, as ſtrong:
And thou, earth! witneſs, whoſe expanding jaws

Clos'd o'er * preſumption's ſacrilegious ſons:
Has not each element, in turn, ſubſcrib'd
The ſoul's high price, and ſworn it to the wiſe?
Has not flame, ocean, aether, earthquake, ſtrove
To ſtrike this truth, through adamantine man?
If not all-adamant, Lorenzo! hear;
All is deluſion: nature is wrapt up,
In tenfold night, from reaſon's keeneſt eye;
There's no conſiſtence, meaning, plan, or end,
In all beneath the ſun, in all above,
(As far as man can penetrate) or heav'n
Is an immenſe, ineſtimable prize;
Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.——
And ſhall each toy be ſtill a match for heav'n!
And full equivalent for groans below?
Who would not give a trifle to prevent
What he would give a thouſand worlds to cure?
Lorenzo! thou haſt ſeen (if thine, to ſee)
All nature, and her God (by nature's courſe,
And nature's courſe controul'd) declare for me:
The ſkies above proclaim 'Immortal man!'
And, 'Man immortal!' all below reſounds.
The world's a ſyſtem of theology,
Read, by the greateſt ſtranger to the ſchools;
If honeſt, learn'd; and ſages o'er a plough.
Is not, Lorenzo! then, impos'd on thee
This hard alternative; or, to renounce
Thy reaſon, and thy ſenſe; or, to believe?
What then is unbelief? 'tis an exploit;
A ſtrenuous enterprize: To gain it, man

* Korah, &c.

Muſt burſt through ev'ry bar of common ſenſe,
Of common ſhame, magnanimouſly wrong;
And what rewards the ſturdy combatant?
His prize, repentance; infamy, his crown.
But wherefore, infamy?—For want of faith,
Down the ſteep precipice of wrong he ſlides;
There's nothing to ſupport him in the right.
Faith in the future wanting, is, at leaſt
In embryo, ev'ry weakneſs, ev'ry guilt;
And ſtrong temptation ripens into birth.
If this life's gain invites him to the deed,
Why not his country ſold, his father ſlain!
'Tis virtue to purſue our good ſupreme;
And his ſupreme, his only good is here.
Ambition, av'rice, by the wiſe diſdain'd,
Is perfect wiſdom, while mankind are fools,
And think a turf, or tombſtone, covers all:
Theſe find employment, and provide for ſenſe
A richer paſture, and a larger range;
And ſenſe by right divine aſcends the throne,
When virtue's prize and proſpect are no more;
Virtue no more we think the will of heaven.
Would heav'n quite beggar virtue, if belov'd?
'Has virtue charms?'—I grant her heav'nly fair;
But if unportion'd, all will int'reſt wed;
Tho' that our admiration, this our choice.
The virtues grow on immortality;
That root deſtroy'd, they wither and expire.
A Deity believ'd, will nought avail;
Rewards and puniſhments make God ador'd;
And hopes and fears give conſcience all her power.
As in the dying parent dies the child,

Virtue, with immortality, expires.
Who tells me he denies his ſoul immortal,
Whate'er his boaſt, has told me, he's a knave.
His duty 'tis, to love himſelf alone;
Nor care tho' mankind periſh, if he ſmiles.
Who thinks ere-long the man ſhall wholly die,
Is dead already; nought but brute ſurvives.
And are there ſuch?—Such candidates there are
For more than death; for utter loſs of being;
Being, the baſis of the Deity!
Aſk you the cauſe?—the cauſe they will not tell;
Nor need they: Oh the ſorceries of ſenſe!
They work their transformation on the ſoul,
Diſmount her like the ſerpent at the fall,
Diſmount her from her native wing (which ſoar'd
Ere-while aethereal heights) and throw her down,
To lick the duſt, and crawl, in ſuch a thought.
Is it in words to paint you? O ye fall'n!
Fall'n from the wings of reaſon, and of hope!
Erect in ſtature, prone in appetite!
Patrons of pleaſure, poſting into pain!
Lovers of argument, averſe to ſenſe!
Boaſters of liberty, faſt-bound in chains!
Lords of the wide creation, and the ſhame!
More ſenſeleſs than th' irrationals you ſcorn!
More baſe than thoſe you rule! than thoſe you pity,
Far more undone! O ye moſt infamous
Of beings, from ſuperior dignity!
Deepeſt in woe from means of boundleſs bliſs!
Ye curſt by bleſſings infinite! Becauſe
Moſt highly favour'd, moſt profoundly loſt!
Ye motly maſs of contradiction ſtrong!

And are you, too, convinc'd your ſouls fly off
In exhalation ſoft, and die in air,
From the full flood of evidence againſt you?
In the coarſe drudgeries, and ſinks of ſenſe,
Your ſouls have quite worn out the make of heaven;
By vice new-caſt, and creatures of your own:
But tho' you can deform, you can't deſtroy;
To curſe, not uncreate, is all your pow'r.
Lorenzo! this black brotherhood renounce;
Renounce St Evremont, and read St Paul.
Ere rapt by miracle, by reaſon wing'd,
His mounting mind made long abode in heaven.
This is freethinking, unconfin'd to parts,
To ſend the ſoul, on curious travel bent,
Thro' all the provinces of human thought;
To dart her flight, thro' the whole ſphere of man;
Of this vaſt univerſe to make the tour;
In each receſs of ſpace and time, at home;
Familiar with their wonders; diving deep;
And, like a prince of boundleſs int'reſts there,
Still moſt ambitious of the moſt remote;
To look on truth unbroken, and entire;
Truth in the ſyſtem, the full orb; where truths
By truths enlighten'd, and ſuſtain'd, afford
An arch-like, ſtrong foundation, to ſupport
Th' incumbent weight of abſolute, complete
Conviction; here, the more we preſs, we ſtand
More firm; who moſt examine, moſt believe.
Parts, like half-ſentences, confound; the whole
Conveys the ſenſe, and GOD is underſtood;
Who not in fragments writes to human race:
Read his whole volume, ſceptic! then reply.

This, this, is thinking free, a thought that graſps
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.
Turn up thine eye, ſurvey this midnight ſcene;
What are earth's kingdoms, to yon boundleſs orbs,
Of human ſouls, one day, the deſtin'd range?
And what yon boundleſs orbs, to godlike man?
Thoſe num'rous worlds that throng the firmament,
And aſk more ſpace in heaven, can roll at large
In man's capacious thought, and ſtill leave room
For ampler orbs; for new creations, there.
Can ſuch a ſoul contract itſelf, to gripe
A point of no dimenſion, of no weight?
It can; it does: The world is ſuch a point:
And, of that point, how ſmall a part enſlaves!
How ſmall a part—of nothing, ſhall I ſay?
Why not?—friends, our chief treaſure! how they drop!
Lucia, Narciſſa fair, Philander, gone!
The grave, like fabl'd Cerberus, has op'd
A triple mouth; and, in an awful voice,
Loud calls my ſoul, and utters all I ſing,
How the world falls to pieces round about us,
And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!
What ſays this tranſportation of my friends?
It bids me love the place where now they dwell,
And ſcorn this wretched ſpot, they leave ſo poor.
Eternity's vaſt ocean lies before thee;
There, there, Lorenzo! thy Clariſſa ſails.
Give thy mind ſea-room; keep it wide of earth,
That rock of ſouls immortal; cut thy cord;
Weigh anchor; ſpread thy ſails; call ev'ry wind;
Eye thy great pole-ſtar; make the land of life.

Two kinds of life has double-natur'd man,
And two of death; the laſt far more ſevere.
Life animal is nurtur'd by the ſun;
Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams.
Life rational ſubſiſts on higher food,
Triumphant in his beams, who made the day.
When we leave that ſun, and are left by this,
(The fate of all who die in ſtubborn guilt)
'Tis utter darkneſs; ſtrictly double death.
We ſink by no judicial ſtroke of heaven,
But nature's courſe; as ſure as plumbets fall.
Since GOD, or man, muſt alter, ere they meet,
(Since light and darkneſs blend not in one ſphere,)
'Tis manifeſt, Lorenzo! who muſt change.
If, then, that double death ſhould prove thy lot,
Blame not the bowels of the DEITY;
Man ſhall be bleſs'd, as far as man permits.
Not man alone, all rationals, heav'n arms
With an illuſtrious, but tremendous pow'r
To counteract its own moſt gracious ends;
And this, of ſtrict neceſſity; not choice;
That pow'r deny'd, men, angels, were no more
But paſſive engines, void of praiſe, or blame.
A nature rational implies the pow'r
Of being bleſs'd, or wretched, as we pleaſe:
Elſe idle reaſon would have nought to do;
And he that would be barr'd capacity
Of pain, courts incapacity of bliſs.
Heav'n wills our happineſs, allows our doom;
Invites us ardently, but not compels;
Heav'n but perſuades, almighty man decrees;
Man is the maker of immortal fates.

Man falls by man, if finally he falls;
And fall he muſt, who learns from death alone
The dreadful ſecret,—that he lives for ever.
Why this to thee? thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
Of ſecond life? but wherefore doubtful ſtill?
Eternal life is nature's ardent wiſh;
What ardently we wiſh, we ſoon believe:
Thy tardy faith declares that wiſh deſtroy'd:
What has deſtroy'd it?——Shall I tell thee, what?
When fear'd the future, 'tis no longer wiſh'd;
And, when unwiſh'd, we ſtrive to diſbelieve.
"Thus infidelity our guilt betrays."
Nor that the ſole detection! bluſh, Lorenzo!
Bluſh for hypocriſy, if not for guilt.
The future fear'd!——an infidel, and fear?
Fear what? a dream? a fable?——How thy dread,
Unwilling evidence, and therefore ſtrong,
Affords my cauſe an undeſign'd ſupport?
How diſbelief affirms, what it denies!
"It, unawares, aſſerts immortal life."—
Surpriſing! infidelity turns out
A creed, and a confeſſion of our ſins:
Apoſtates, thus, are orthodox divines.
Lorenzo! with Lorenzo claſh no more;
Nor longer a tranſparent vizor wear.
Think'ſt thou, RELIGION only has her maſk?
Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites,
Pretend the worſt, and, at the bottom, fail.
When viſited by thought (thought will intrude)
Like him they ſerve, they tremble, and believe.
Is there hypocriſy ſo foul as this?
So fatal to the welfare of the world?

Two kinds of life has double-natur'd man,
And two of death; the laſt far more ſevere.
Life animal is nurtur'd by the ſun;
Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams.
Life rational ſubſiſts on higher food,
Triumphant in his beams, who made the day.
When we leave that ſun, and are left by this,
(The fate of all who die in ſtubborn guilt)
'Tis utter darkneſs; ſtrictly double death.
We ſink by no judicial ſtroke of heaven,
But nature's courſe; as ſure as plumbets fall.
Since GOD, or man, muſt alter, ere they meet,
(Since light and darkneſs blend not in one ſphere,)
'Tis manifeſt, Lorenzo! who muſt change.
If, then, that double death ſhould prove thy lot,
Blame not the bowels of the DEITY;
Man ſhall be bleſs'd, as far as man permits.
Not man alone, all rationals, heav'n arms
With an illuſtrious, but tremendous pow'r
To counteract its own moſt gracious ends;
And this, of ſtrict neceſſity; not choice;
That pow'r deny'd, men, angels, were no more
But paſſive engines, void of praiſe, or blame.
A nature rational implies the pow'r
Of being bleſs'd, or wretched, as we pleaſe:
Elſe idle reaſon would have nought to do;
And he that would be barr'd capacity
Of pain, courts incapacity of bliſs.
Heav'n wills our happineſs, allows our doom;
Invites us ardently, but not compels;
Heav'n but perſuades, almighty man decrees;
Man is the maker of immortal fates.

Man falls by man, if finally he falls;
And fall he muſt, who learns from death alone
The dreadful ſecret,—that he lives for ever.
Why this to thee? thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
Of ſecond life? but wherefore doubtful ſtill?
Eternal life is nature's ardent wiſh;
What ardently we wiſh, we ſoon believe:
Thy tardy faith declares that wiſh deſtroy'd:
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What deteſtation, what contempt, their due?
And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their eſcape
That Chriſtian candour they ſtrive hard to ſcorn.
If not for that aſylum, they might find
A hell on earth; nor 'ſcape a worſe below.
With inſolence, and impotence of thought,
Inſtead of racking fancy, to refute,
Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.——
But ſhall I dare confeſs the dire reſult?
Can thy proud reaſon brook ſo black a brand?
From purer manners, to ſublimer faith,
Is nature's unavoidable aſcent;
An honeſt deiſt, where the goſpel ſhines,
Matur'd to nobler, in the Chriſtian ends.
When that bleſt change arrives, e'en caſt aſide
This ſong ſuperfluous; life immortal ſtrikes
Conviction, in a flood of light divine.
A Chriſtian dwells, like † URIEL, in the ſun;
Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight;
And ardent hope anticipates the ſkies.
Of that bright ſun, Lorenzo! ſcale the ſphere;
'Tis eaſy; it invites thee; it deſcends
From heav'n to woo, and waft thee whence it came:
Read and revere the ſacred page; a page
Where triumphs immortality; a page
Which not the whole creation could produce;
Which not the conflagration ſhall deſtroy;
In nature's ruins not one letter loſt:
'Tis printed in the mind of gods for ever.

† Milton.

In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore
Dost smile?—poor wretch! thy guardian angel weeps.
Angels, and men, assent to what I sing;
Wits smile, and thank me for my midnight dream.
How vicious hearts fume phrenzy to the brain?
Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame;
Pert infidelity is wit's cockade,
To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,
By loss of being, dreadfully secure.
Lorenzo! if thy doctrine wins the day,
And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field;
If this is all, if earth a final scene,
Take head; stand fast; be sure to be a knave;
A knave in grain! ne'er deviate to the right:
Should'st thou be good——how infinite thy loss!
Guilt only makes annihilation gain.
Blest scheme! which life deprives of comfort, death
Of hope; and which VICE only, recommends.
If so; where, infidels! your bait thrown out
To catch weak converts? where your lofty boast
Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man?
ANNIHILATION! I confess, in these.
What can reclaim you? Dare I hope profound
Philosophers the converts of a song?
Yet know, its † title flatters you, not me;
Yours be the praise to make my title good;
Mine to bless heav'n, and triumph in your praise.
But since so pestilential your disease,
Though sov'reign is the med'cine I prescribe,
As yet, I'll neither triumph, nor despair:

† The infidel reclaimed.

But hope, ere-long, my midnight dream will wake
Your hearts, and teach your wiſdom—to be wiſe:
For why ſhould ſouls immortal, made for bliſs,
E'er wiſh (and wiſh in vain!) that ſouls could die?
What ne'er can die, Oh! grant to live; and crown
The wiſh, and aim, and labour of the ſkies;
Increaſe, and enter on the joys of heav'n:
Thus ſhall my title paſs a ſacred ſeal,
Receive an Imprimatur from above,
While angels ſhout—'An infidel reclaim'd!'
To cloſe, Lorenzo! ſpite of all my pains,
Still ſeems it ſtrange, that thou ſhouldſt live for ever!
Is it leſs ſtrange, that thou ſhouldſt live at all?
This is a miracle, and that no more.
Who gave beginning, can exclude an end.
Deny thou art: Then, doubt if thou ſhalt be.
A miracle with miracles inclos'd,
Is man: And ſtarts his faith at what is ſtrange?
What leſs than wonders, from the Wonderful;
What leſs than miracles, from GOD, can flow?
Admit a GOD—that myſtery ſupreme!
That cauſe uncaus'd! all other wonders ceaſe;
Nothing is marvellous for him to do:
Deny him—all is myſtery beſides;
Millions of myſteries! each darker far,
Than that thy wiſdom would, unwiſely, ſhun.
If weak thy faith, why chuſe the harder ſide?
We nothing know, but what is marvellous;
Yet what is marvellous, we can't believe.
So weak our reaſon, and ſo great our GOD,
What moſt ſurpriſes in the ſacred page,
Or full as ſtrange, or ſtranger, muſt be true.

Faith is not reaſon's labour, but repoſe.
To faith, and virtue, why ſo backward, man?
From hence:—The preſent ſtrongly ſtrikes us all;
The future, faintly: Can we, then, be men?
If men, Lorenzo! the reverſe is right.
Reaſon is man's peculiar; ſenſe, the brute's.
The preſent is the ſcanty realm of ſenſe;
The future, reaſon's empire unconfin'd;
On that expending all her godlike pow'r,
She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs, there;
There, builds her bleſſings; there, expects her praiſe;
And nothing aſks of fortune, or of men.
And what is reaſon? be ſhe, thus, defin'd;
Reaſon is upright ſtature in the ſoul.
Oh! be a man;—and ſtrive to be a god.
"For what? (thou ſayſt:) To damp the joys of life?"
No; to give heart and ſubſtance to thy joys.
That tyrant, Hope, mark, how ſhe domineers;
She bids us quit realities, for dreams;
Safety, and peace, for hazard, and alarm;
That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the ſoul,
She bids ambition quit its taken prize,
Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it ſits,
Tho' bearing crowns, to ſpring at diſtant game;
And plunge in toils, and dangers—for repoſe.
If hope precarious, and of things, when gain'd,
Of little moment, and as little ſtay,
Can ſweaten toils and dangers into joys;
What then, that hope, which nothing can defeat,
Our leave unaſk'd? rich hope of boundleſs bliſs!
Bliſs, paſt man's pow'r to paint it; time's, to cloſe!

This hope is earth's moſt eſtimable prize:
This is man's portion, while no more than man:
Hope, of all paſſions, moſt befriends us here;
Paſſions of prouder name befriend us leſs.
Joy has her tears; and tranſport has her death;
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, tho' ſtrong,
Man's heart, at once, inſpirits, and ſerenes;
Nor makes him pay his wiſdom for his joys;
'Tis all our preſent ſtate can ſafely bear,
Health to the frame! and vigour to the mind!
A joy attemper'd! a chaſtis'd delight!
Like the fair ſummer-ev'ning, mild, and ſweet!
'Tis man's full cup; his paradiſe below!
A bleſt hereafter, then, or hop'd, or gain'd,
Is all;—our whole of happineſs: Full-proof,
I choſe no trivial or inglorious theme.
And know, ye foes to ſong! (well-meaning men,
Tho' quite forgotten † half your bible's praiſe!)
Important truths, in ſpite of verſe, may pleaſe:
Grave minds you praiſe; nor can you praiſe too much:
If there is weight in an ETERNITY,
Let the grave liſten;—and be graver ſtill.

† The poetical parts of it.

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

VIRTUE's APOLOGY:

OR,

The MAN of the WORLD answered.

In which are conſidered,

The LOVE of this LIFE;

The AMBITION and PLEASURE, with the

WIT and WISDOM of the WORLD.

THE

COMPLAINT,

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

AND has all nature, then, eſpous'd my part?
Have I brib'd heav'n, and earth, to plead a-
gainſt thee?
And is thy ſoul immortal?——what remains?
All, all, Lorenzo; make immortal, bleſt.
Unbleſt immortals! what can ſhock us more?
And yet Lorenzo ſtill affects the world;
There, ſtows his treaſure; thence, his title draws,
Man of the world! (for ſuch wouldſt thou be call'd)
And art thou proud of that inglorious ſtyle?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was,
In ancient days; and Chriſtian,——in an age,
When men were men, and not aſham'd of heav'n,
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
Sprinkled with dews from the Caſtalian font,
Fain would I re-baptize thee, and confer
A purer ſpirit, and a nobler name.

Thy fond attachments fatal, and inflam'd,
Point out my path, and dictate to my ſong:
To thee, the world how fair! how ſtrongly ſtrikes
Ambition! and gay pleaſures ſtronger ſtill!
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt, that lays
Thy virtue dead! be theſe my triple theme;
Nor ſhall thy wit or wiſdom, be forgot.

Common the theme; not ſo the ſong; if ſhe
My ſong invokes, Urania, deigns to ſmile.
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,
If ſhe diſſolves, the man of earth, at once,
Starts from his trance, and ſighs for other ſcenes;
Scenes, where theſe ſparks of night, theſe ſtars, ſhall
ſhine
Unnumber'd ſuns (for all things, as they are,
The bleſt behold;) and, in one glory, pour
Their blended blaze on man's aſtoniſh'd ſight;
A blaze,——the leaſt illuſtrious object there.

Lorenzo! ſince eternal is at hand,
To ſwallow time's ambitions; as the vaſt
Leviathan, the bubbles vain, that ride
High on the foaming billow; what avail
High titles, high deſcent, attainments high,
If unattain'd our higheſt? O Lorenzo!
What lofty thoughts, theſe elements above,
What tow'ring hopes, what ſallies from the ſun,
What grand ſurveys of deſtiny divine,
And pompous preſage of unfathom'd fate,
Should roll in boſoms, where a ſpirit burns,
Bound for eternity! in boſoms read
By him, who foibles in archangels ſees!
On human hearts he bends a jealous eye,

And marks, and in heav'n's regiſter inrolls,
The riſe, and progreſs, of each option there;
Sacred to doomſday! that the page unfolds,
And ſpread us to the gaze of gods and men.
  And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine?
This world! and this, unrival'd by the ſkies!
A world, where luſt of pleaſure, grandeur, gold,
Three daemons that divide its realms between them,
With ſtrokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's reſtleſs heart, their ſport, their flying ball;
Till, with the giddy circle, ſick, and tir'd,
It pants for peace, and drops into deſpair.
Such is the world Lorenzo ſets above
That glorious promiſe angels were eſteem'd
Too mean to bring: A promiſe, their ador'd
Deſcended to communicate, and preſs,
By counſel, miracle, life, death, on man.
Such is the world Lorenzo's wiſdom wooes,
And on its thorny pillow ſeeks repoſe;
A pillow, which, like opiates ill-prepar'd,
Intoxicates, but not compoſes; fills
The viſionary mind with gay chimeras,
All the wild traſh of ſleep, without the reſt;
What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams of joy!
  How frail, men, things! how momentary, both!
Fantaſtic chace, of ſhadows hunting ſhades!
The gay, the buſy, equal, tho' unlike;
Equal in wiſdom, differently wiſe!
Thro' flow'ry meadows, and thro' dreary waſtes,
One buſtling, and one dancing into death.
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There, others we deſpiſe; and here, ourſelves.
Amid diſguſt eternal, dwells delight?
'Tis approbation ſtrikes the ſtring of joy.
What wond'rous prize has kindled this career,
Stuns with the din, and choaks us with the duſt,
On life's gay ſtage, one inch above the grave?
The proud run up and down in queſt of eyes;
The ſenſual, in purſuit of ſomething worſe:
The grave, of gold; the politic, of power;
And all, of other butterflies, as vain!
As eddies draw things frivolous, and light,
How is man's heart by vanity drawn in;
On the ſwift circle of returning toys,
Whirl'd, ſtraw-like, round and round, and then in-
gulph'd,
Where gay deluſion darkens to deſpair!
'This is a beaten track.'——Is this a track
Should not be beaten? never beat enough,
Till enough learnt the truths it would inſpire.
Shall truth be ſilent, becauſe folly frowns?
Turn the world's hiſtory; what find we there,
But fortune's ſports, or nature's cruel claims,
Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge.
And endleſs inhumanities on man?
Fame's trumpet ſeldom ſounds, but, like the knell,
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Man is the tale of narrative old Time;
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The days, his daughters, as they ſpin our hours
On fortune's wheel, where accident unthought
Oft, in a moment, ſnaps life's ſtrongeſt thread,
Each, in her turn, ſome tragic ſtory tells,
With, now-and-then, a wretched farce between;
And fills his chronicle with human woes.
Time's daughters, true as thoſe of men, deceive us;
Not one, but puts ſome cheat on all mankind:
While in their father's boſom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes; and promiſe much
Of amiable; but hold him not o'erwiſe,
Who dares to truſt them; and laugh round the year,
At ſtill-confiding, ſtill-confoounded, man,
Confiding, tho' confounded; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,
And ever looking for the never-ſeen.
Life to the laſt, like harden'd felons, lyes;
Nor owns itſelf a cheat, till it expires.
Its little joys go out by one and one,
And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night;
Night darker, than what, now, involves the pole.
O THOU, who doſt permit theſe ills to fall,
For gracious ends, and wouldſt that man ſhould mourn!
O THOU, whoſe hands this goodly fabric fram'd,
Who know'ſt it beſt, and wouldſt that man ſhould know!
What is this ſublunary world? a vapour;
A vapour all it holds; itſelf, a vapour,
From the damp bed of chaos, by thy beam
Exhal'd, ordain'd to ſwim its deſtin'd hour
In ambient air, then melt, and diſappear.

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Point out my path, and dictate to my ſong:
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With, now-and-then, a wretched farce between;
And fills his chronicle with human woes.
Time's daughters, true as thoſe of men, deceive us;
Not one, but puts ſome cheat on all mankind:
While in their father's boſom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes; and promiſe much
Of amiable; but hold him not o'erwiſe,
Who dares to truſt them; and laugh round the year,
At ſtill-confiding, ſtill-confounded, man,
Confiding, tho' confounded; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,
And ever looking for the never-ſeen.
Life to the laſt, like harden'd felons, lyes;
Nor owns itſelf a cheat, till it expires.
Its little joys go out by one and one,
And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night;
Night darker, than what, now, involves the pole.
O THOU, who doſt permit theſe ills to fall,
For gracious ends, and wouldſt that man ſhould mourn!
O THOU, whoſe hands this goodly fabric fram'd,
Who know'ſt it beſt, and wouldſt that man ſhould know!
What is this ſublunary world? a vapour;
A vapour all it holds; itſelf, a vapour,
From the damp bed of chaos, by thy beam
Exhal'd, ordain'd to ſwim its deſtin'd hour
In ambient air, then melt, and diſappear.

Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom;
As mortal, tho' leſs tranſient, than her ſons;
Yet they doat on her, as the world and they
Were both eternal, ſolid; THOU, a dream.
They doat, on what? immortal views apart,
A region of outſides! a land of ſhadows!
A fruitful field of flow'ry promiſes!
A wilderneſs of joys! perplex'd with doubts,
And ſharp with thorns! a troubled ocean, ſpread
With bold adventurers, their all on board;
No ſecond hope, if here their fortune frowns;
Frown ſoon it muſt. Of various rates they ſail,
Of enſigns various; all alike in this,
All reſtleſs, anxious; toſt with hopes, and fears,
In calmeſt ſkies; obnoxious all to ſtorm!
And ſtormy the moſt general blaſt of life:
All bound for happineſs; yet few provide
The chart of knowledge, pointing where it lies;
Or virtue's helm, to ſhape the courſe deſign'd:
All, more or leſs, capricious fate lament,
Now lifted by the tide, and now reſorb'd,
And farther from their wiſhes, than before:
All, more or leſs, againſt each other daſh
To mutual hurt, by guſts of paſſion driven,
And ſuff'ring more from folly, than from fate.
Ocean! thou dreadful and tumultuous home
Of dangers, at eternal war with man!
Death's capital, where moſt he domineers,
With all his choſen terrors frowning round,
(Tho' lately feaſted high at * Albion's coſt)

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

Wide-op'ning, and loud-roaring ſtill for more!
Too faithful mirror! how doſt thou reflect
The melancholy face of human life!
The ſtrong reſemblance tempts me farther ſtill:
And, haply, Britain may be deeper ſtruck
By mortal truth, in ſuch a mirror ſeen,
Which nature holds for ever at her eye.
  Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope;
When young, with ſanguine chear, and ſtreamers gay,
We cut our cable, launch into the world,
And fondly dream each wind and ſtar our friend;
All, in ſome darling enterprize embark'd:
But where is he can fathom its event?
Amid a multitude of artleſs hands,
Ruin's ſure perquiſite! her lawful prize!
Some ſteer aright; but the black blaſt blows hard,
And puffs them wide of hope: With hearts of proof,
Full againſt wind and tide, ſome win their way;
And when ſtrong effort has deſerv'd the port,
And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won! 'tis loſt!
Tho' ſtrong their oar, ſtill ſtronger is their fate:
They ſtrike; and, while they triumph, they expire.
In ſtreſs of weather, moſt, ſome ſink outright;
O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows cloſe;
To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
Others a ſhort memorial leave behind,
Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulph'd;
It floats a moment, and is ſeen no more:
One Caeſar lives; a thouſand are forgot.
How few, beneath auſpicious planets born,
(Darlings of providence! fond fate's elect!)
With ſwelling ſails make good the promis'd port,

With all their wiſhes freighted! yet ev'n theſe,
Freighted with all their wiſhes, ſoon complain;
Free from misfortunes, not from nature free,
They ſtill are men; and when is man ſecure?
As fatal time, as ſtorm! the ruſh of years
Beats down their ſtrength; their numberleſs eſcapes
In ruin end: And now, their proud ſucceſs
But plants new terrors on the victor's brow:
What pain to quit the world, juſt made their own,
Their neſt ſo deeply down'd, and built ſo high!
Too low they build, who build beneath the ſtars.
Woe then apart (if woe apart can be
From mortal man,) and fortune at our nod,
The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and auguſt!
What are they?——the moſt happy (ſtrange to ſay!)
Convince me moſt of human miſery:
What are they? ſmiling wretches of to-morrow!
More wretched, then, than e'er their ſlave can be;
Their treach'rous bleſſings, at the day of need,
Like other faithleſs friends, unmaſk, and ſting:
Then, what provoking indigence in wealth!
What aggravated impotence in power!
High titles, then, what inſult of their pain!
If that ſole anchor, equal to the waves,
Immortal hope! defies not the rude ſtorm,
Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage,
And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.
Is this a ſketch of what thy ſoul admires?
'But here (thou ſay'ſt) the miſeries of life
'Are huddled in a group. A more diſtinct
'Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news.'
Look on life's ſtages: They ſpeak plainer ſtill;

The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou ſigh.
Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold
The beſt that can befal the beſt on earth;
The boy has virtue by his mother's ſide:
Yes, on Florello look: A father's heart
Is tender, tho' the man is made of ſtone;
The truth, thro' ſuch a medium ſeen, may make
Impreſſion deep, and fondneſs prove thy friend.
  Florello lately caſt on this rude coaſt
A helpleſs infant; now a heedleſs child;
To poor Clariſſa's throes, thy care ſucceeds;
Care full of love, and yet ſevere as hate!
O'er thy ſoul's joy how oft thy fondneſs frowns!
Needful auſterities his will reſtrain;
As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.
As yet, his reaſon cannot go alone;
But aſks a ſterner nurſe to lead it on.
His litle heart is often terrify'd;
The bluſh of morning, in his cheek, turns pale;
Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye;
His harmleſs eye! and drowns an angel there.
Ah! what avails his innocence? the taſk
Enjoin'd, muſt diſcipline his early pow'rs;
He learns to ſigh, ere he is known to ſin;
Guiltleſs, and ſad! a wretch before the fall!
How cruel this! more cruel to forbear.
Our nature ſuch, with neceſſary pains,
We purchaſe proſpects of precarious peace:
Tho' not a father, this might ſteal a ſigh.
  Suppoſe him diſciplin'd aright (if not,
'Twill ſink our poor account to poorer ſtill;)
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,

He leaps incloſure, bounds into the world;
The world is taken, after ten years toil,
Like antient Troy; and all its joys his own.
Alas! the world's a tutor more ſevere;
Its leſſons hard, and ill deſerve his pains;
Unteaching all his virtuous nature taught,
Or books (fair virtue's advocates!) inſpir'd.
For who receives him into public life?
Men of the world, the terrae-filial breed,
Welcome the modeſt ſtranger to their ſphere,
(Which glitter'd long, at diſtance, in his ſight)
And in their hoſpitable arms, incloſe:
Men, who think nought ſo ſtrong of the romance,
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend:
Men, that act up to reaſon's golden rule,
All weakneſs of affection quite ſubdu'd:
Men, that would bluſh at being thought ſincere,
And feign, for glory, the few faults they want;
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well;
As if, to them, vice ſhone her own reward.
Lorenzo! canſt thou bear a ſhocking ſight?
Such, for Florello's ſake, 'twill now appear:
See, the ſteel'd files of ſeaſon'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burniſh'd falſhood bright;
Deep in the fatal ſtratagems of peace;
All ſoft ſenſation, in the throng, rubb'd off;
All their keen purpoſe, in politeneſs, ſheath'd;
His friends eternal—during intereſt;
His foes implacable—when worth their while;
At war with every welfare, but their own;
As wiſe as Lucifer, and half as good;
And by whom none, but Lucifer, can gain——

Naked, through theſe (ſo common fate ordains)
Naked of heart, his cruel courſe he runs,
Stung out of all, moſt amiable in life,
Prompt truth, and open thought, and ſmiles unfeign'd;
Affection, as his ſpecies, wide-diffus'd;
Noble preſumptions to mankind's renown;
Ingenuous truſt, and confidence of love.
  Theſe claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
Will coſt him many a ſigh; till time, and pains,
From the ſlow miſtreſs of this ſchool, experience,
And her aſſiſtant, pauſing, pale, diſtruſt,
Purchaſe a dear-bought clue to lead his youth
Through ſerpentine obliquities of life,
And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
And happy! if the clue ſhall come ſo cheap;
For, while we learn to fence with public guilt,
Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,
If leſs than heav'nly virtue is our guard.
Thus, a ſtrange kind of curſt neceſſity
Brings down the ſterling temper of his ſoul,
By baſe alloy, to bear the current ſtamp,
Below call'd wiſdom; ſinks him into ſafety;
And brands him into credit with the world;
Where ſpecious titles dignify diſgrace,
And nature's injuries are arts of life;
Where brighter reaſon prompts to bolder crimes;
And heav'nly talents make infernal hearts;
That unſurmountable extreme of guilt!
  Poor Machiavel! who labour'd hard his plan,
Forgot, that genius need not go to ſchool;
Forgot, that man, without a tutor wiſe,

His plan had practis'd, long before 'twas writ.
The world's all title-page, there's no contents;
The world's all face; the man who shews his heart,
Is whooted for his nudities, and scorn'd.
A man I knew, who liv'd upon a smile;
And well it fed him; he look'd plump and fair;
While rankest venom foam'd thro' ev'ry vein.
Lorenzo! what I tell thee, take not ill!
Living, he fawn'd on ev'ry fool alive;
And, dying, curs'd the friend on whom he liv'd.
To such proficients thou art half a saint.
In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)
How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
Studious their nests to feather in a trice,
With all the necromantics of their art,
Playing the game of faces on each other,
Making court sweet-meats of their latent gall,
In foolish hope, to steal each other's trust;
Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd;
And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone!
Their parts we doubt not; but be that their shame;
Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
Stoop to mean wiles, that would disgrace a fool?
And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve?
For who can thank the man, he cannot see?
Why so much cover? it defeats itself.
Ye, that know all things! know ye not, mens' hearts
Are therefore known, because they are conceal'd?
For why conceal'd?—the cause they need not tell.
I give him joy, that's aukward at a lye;
Whose feeble nature truth keeps still in awe;
His incapacity is his renown.
'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise;

It ſhews our ſpirit, or it proves our ſtrength.
Thou ſay'ſt, 'tis needful: Is it therefore right?
Howe'er, I grant it ſome ſmall ſign of grace,
To ſtrain at an excuſe: And wouldſt thou then
Eſcape that cruel need? thou may'ſt, with eaſe;
Think no poſt needful that demands a knave.
When late our civil helm was ſhifting hands,
So P—— thought: Think better, if you can.
But this, how rare! the public path of life
Is dirty:—Yet, allow that dirt its due,
It makes the noble mind more noble ſtill:
The world's no neuter; it will wound, or ſave;
Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
You ſay; the world, well-known, will make a man:—
The world, well-known, will give our hearts to heav'n,
Or make us daemons, long before we die.
To ſhew how fair the world, thy miſtreſs, ſhines,
Take either part, ſure ills attend the choice;
Sure, tho' not equal, detriment enſues.
For virtue's ſelt is deify'd on earth;
Virtue has her relapſes, conflicts, foes;
Foes, that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
Virtue has her peculiar ſet of pains.
True; friends to virtue, laſt, and leaſt, complain;
But if they ſigh, can others hope to ſmile?
If wiſdom has her miſeries to mourn,
How can poor folly lead a happy life?
And if both ſuffer, what has earth to boaſt,
Where he moſt happy, who the leaſt laments?
Where much, much patience, the moſt envy'd ſtate,
And ſome forgiveneſs, needs, the beſt of friends?
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For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,
Of neither ſhall he find the ſhadow here.

The world's ſworn advocate, without a fee,
Lorenzo ſmartly, with a ſmile, replies;
'Thus far thy ſong is right; and all muſt own,
'Virtue has her peculiar ſet of pains ——
'And joys peculiar who to vice denies?
'If vice it is, with nature to comply:
'If pride, and ſenſe, are ſo predominant,
'To check, not overcome, them, makes a ſaint,
'Can nature in a plainer voice proclaim
'Pleaſure, and glory, the chief good of man?'
Can pride, and ſenſuality, rejoice?
From purity of thought, all pleaſure ſprings;
And, from an humble ſpirit, all our peace.
Ambition, pleaſure! let us talk of theſe;
Of theſe, the Porch, and Academy, talk'd;
Of theſe, each following age had much to ſay;
Yet unexhauſted, ſtill, the needful theme.
Who talks of theſe, to mankind all at once
He talks; for where the ſaint from either free?
Are theſe thy refuge?—no; theſe ruſh upon thee;
Thy vitals ſeize, and, vulture-like, devour:
I'll try, if I can pluck thee from thy rock,
Prometheus! from this barren ball of earth;
If reaſon can unchain thee, thou art free.
And, firſt, thy Caucaſus, ambition calls;
Mountain of torments! eminence of woes!
Of courted woes! and courted through miſtake!
'Tis not ambition charms thee; 'tis a cheat
Will make thee ſtart, as H—— at his Moor.
Do'ſt graſp at greatneſs? Firſt, know what it is:
Think'ſt thou thy greatneſs in diſtinction lies?
Not in the feather, wave it e'er ſo high,

By fortune ſtuck, to mark us from the throng,
Is glory lodg'd: 'Tis lodg'd in the reverſe;
In that which joins, in that which equais, all,
The monarch, and his ſlave;—'A deathleſs ſoul,
'Unbounded proſpect, and immortal kin,
'A Father God, and brothers in the ſkies;'
Elder, indeed, in time; but leſs remote
In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man;
Why greater what can fall, than what can riſe?
If ſtill delirious, now, Lorenzo? go;
And with thy full-blown brothers of the world,
Throw ſcorn around thee? caſt it on thy ſlaves;
Thy ſlaves, and equals: How ſcorn caſt on them
Rebounds on thee! if man is mean, as man,
Art thou a god? If fortune make him ſo,
Beware the conſequence: A maxim that,
Which draws a monſtrous picture of mankind,
Where, in the drapery, the man is loſt;
Externals flutt'ring, and the ſoul forgot.
Thy greateſt glory when diſpos'd to boaſt,
Boaſt that aloud, in which thy ſervants ſhare.
We wiſely ſtrip the ſteed we mean to buy;
Judge we, in their capariſons, of men?
It nought avails thee, where, but what, thou art;
All the' diſtinctions of this little life
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man.
When, thro' death's ſtreights, earth's ſubtile ſerpents creep,
Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
They leave their party-colour'd robe behind,
All that now glitters, while they rear aloft

Their brazen creſts, and hiſs at us below.
Of fortune's fucus ſtrip them, yet alive;
Strip them of body, too; nay, cloſer ſtill,
Away with all, but moral, in their minds;
And let, what then remains, impoſe their name;
Pronounce them weak, or worthy; great, or mean.
How mean that ſnuff of glory fortune lights,
And death puts out! Doſt thou demand a teſt,
A teſt, at once, infallible, and ſhort,
Of real greatneſs? that man greatly lives,
Whate'er his fate, or fame, who greatly dies;
High-fluſh'd with hope, where heroes ſhall deſpair.
If this a true criterion, many courts,
Illuſtrious, might afford but few grandees.
Th' Almighty, from his throne, on earth ſurveys
Nought greater, than an honeſt, humble heart;
An humble heart, his reſidence! pronounc'd
His ſecond ſeat; and rival to the ſkies.
The private path, the ſecret acts of men,
If noble, far the nobleſt of our lives!
How far above Lorenzo's glory ſits
Th' illuſtrious maſter of a name unknown?
Whoſe worth unrival'd, and unwitneſs'd, loves
Life's ſacred ſhades, where gods converſe with men;
And peace, beyond the world's conception, ſmiles!
As thou! (now dark) before we part, ſhalt ſee.
But thy great ſoul this ſkulking glory ſcorns.
Lorenzo's ſick, but when Lorenzo's ſeen;
And, when he ſhrugs at public buſ'neſs, lyes.
Deny'd the public eye, the public voice,
As if he liv'd on others breath, he dies.

Fain would he make the world his pedeſtal;
Mankind the gazers; the ſole figure, he.
Knows he, that mankind praiſe againſt their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can?
Knows he, that faithleſs fame her whiſper has,
As well as trumpet? that his vanity
Is ſo much tickled from not hearing all?
Knows this all-knower, that from itch of praiſe,
Or, from an itch more ſordid, when he ſhines,
Taking his country by five hundred ears,
Senates at once admire him, and deſpiſe,
With modeſt laughter lining loud applauſe,
Which makes the ſmile more mortal to his fame?
His fame, which (like the mighty Caeſar) crown'd
With laurels, in full ſenate, greatly falls,
By ſeeming friends, that honour, and deſtroy.
We riſe in glory, as we ſink in pride:
Where boaſting ends, their dignity begins:
And yet, miſtaken beyond all miſtake,
The blind Lorenzo's proud!—of being proud;
And dreams himſelf aſcending in his fall.
An eminence, though fancy'd, turns the brain;
All vice wants hellebore; but, of all vice,
Pride loudeſt calls, and for the largeſt bowl;
Becauſe, all other vice unlike, it flies,
In fact, the point, in fancy moſt purſu'd.
Who court applauſe, oblige the world in this;
They gratify man's paſſion to refuſe.
Superior honour, when aſſum'd, is loſt;
Ev'n good men turn banditti, and rejoice,
Like Kouli-Khan, in plunder of the proud.

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His ſecond ſeat; and rival to the ſkies.
The private path, the ſecret acts of men,
If noble, far the nobleſt of our lives!
How far above Lorenzo's glory ſits
Th' illuſtrious maſter of a name unknown?
Whoſe worth unrival'd, and unwitneſs'd, loves
Life's ſacred ſhades, where gods converſe with men;
And peace, beyond the world's conception, ſmiles!
As thou! (now dark) before we part, ſhalt ſee.
But thy great ſoul this ſkulking glory ſcorns.
Lorenzo's ſick, but when Lorenzo's ſeen;
And, when he ſhrugs at public bus'neſs, lyes.
Deny'd the public eye, the public voice,
As if he liv'd on others breath, he dies.

Fain would he make the world his pedeſtal;
Mankind the gazers; the ſole figure, he.
Knows he, that mankind praiſe againſt their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can?
Knows he, that faithleſs fame her whiſper has,
As well as trumpet? that his vanity
Is ſo much tickled from not hearing all?
Knows this all-knower, that from itch of praiſe,
Or, from an itch more ſordid, when he ſhines,
Taking his country by five hundred ears,
Senates at once admire him, and deſpiſe,
With modeſt laughter lining loud applauſe,
Which makes the ſmile more mortal to his fame?
His fame, which (like the mighty Caeſar) crown'd
With laurels, in full ſenate, greatly falls,
By ſeeming friends, that honour, and deſtroy.
We riſe in glory, as we ſink in pride:
Where boaſting ends, their dignity begins:
And yet, miſtaken beyond all miſtake,
The blind Lorenzo's proud!—of being proud;
And dreams himſelf aſcending in his fall.
An eminence, though fancy'd, turns the brain;
All vice wants hellebore; but, of all vice,
Pride loudeſt calls, and for the largeſt bowl;
Becauſe, all other vice unlike, it flies,
In fact, the point, in fancy moſt purſu'd.
Who court applauſe, oblige the world in this;
They gratify man's paſſion to refuſe.
Superior honour, when aſſum'd, is loſt;
Ev'n good men turn banditti, and rejoice,
Like Kouli-Khan, in plunder of the proud.

Tho' ſomewhat diſconcerted, ſteady ſtill
To the world's cauſe, with half a face of joy,
Lorenzo cries——'Be, then, ambition caſt;
'Ambition's dearer far ſtands unimpeach'd,
'Gay pleaſure! proud ambition is her ſlave;
'For her, he ſoars at great, and hazards ill;
'For her, he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes;
'And paves his way, with crowns, to reach her ſmile;
'Who can reſiſt her charms?'—Or ſhould? Lorenzo!
What mortal ſhall reſiſt, where angels yield?
Pleaſure's the miſtreſs of aetherial pow'rs;
For her contend the rival gods above;
Pleaſure's the miſtreſs of the world below;
And well it is for man, that pleaſure charms;
How would all ſtagnate, but for pleaſure's ray!
How would the frozen ſtream of action ceaſe!
What is the pulſe of this ſo buſy world?
The love of pleaſure: That, thro' ev'ry vein,
Throws motion, warmth; and ſhuts out death from life.

Though various are the tempers of mankind,
Pleaſure's gay family holds all in chains:
Some moſt affect the black; and ſome, the fair;
Some honeſt pleaſure court; and ſome, obſcene.
Pleaſures obſcene are various, as the throng
Of paſſions, that can err in human hearts;
Miſtake their objects, or tranſgreſs their bounds.
Think you there's but one whoredom? whoredom, all,
But when our reaſon licences delight.
Doſt doubt, Lorenzo? thou ſhalt doubt no more.
Thy father chides thy gallantries; yet hugs
An ugly, common harlot, in the dark;

A rank adulterer with others gold;
And that hag, vengeance, in a corner, charms.
Hatred her brothel has, as well as love,
Where horrid Epicures debauch in blood.
Whate'er the motive, pleaſure is the mark.
For her, the black aſſaſſin draws his ſword;
For her, dark ſtateſmen trim their midnight lamp,
To which no ſingle ſacrifice may fall;
For her, the ſaint abſtains; the miſer ſtarves;
The Stoic proud, for pleaſure, pleaſure ſcorn'd;
For her, affliction's daughters grief indulge,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears;
For her, guilt, ſhame, toil, danger, we defy;
And, with an aim voluptuous, ruſh on death.
Thus univerſal her deſpotic power.

And as her empire wide, her praiſe is juſt.
Patron of pleaſure! doater on delight!
I am thy rival; pleaſure I profeſs;
Pleaſure, the purpoſe of my gloomy ſong.
Pleaſure is nought but virtue's gayer name;
I wrong her ſtill, I rate her worth too low;
Virtue the root, and pleaſure is the flower;
And honeſt Epicurus' foes were fools.

But this ſounds harſh, and gives the wiſe offence;
If o'erſtrain'd wiſdom ſtill retains the name.
How knits auſterity her cloudy brow,
And blames, as bold, and hazardous, the praiſe
Of pleaſure, to mankind, unprais'd, too dear!
Ye modern Stoics! hear my ſoft reply;
Their ſenſes men will truſt: We can't impoſe;
Or, if we could, is impoſition right?
Own honey ſweet; but, owning, add this ſting;

'When mix'd with poiſon, it is deadly too.'
Truth never was indebted to a lye.
Is nought but virtue to be prais'd, as good?
Why then is health preferr'd before diſeaſe?
What nature loves is good, without our leave.
And where no future drawback cries, 'Beware;'
Pleaſure, though not from virtue, ſhould prevail.
'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to heav'n;
How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!
The love of pleaſure is man's eldeſt born,
Born in his cradle, living to his tomb;
Wiſdom, her younger ſiſter, though more grave,
Was meant to miniſter, and not to mar,
Imperial pleaſure, queen of human hearts.
Lorenzo! thou, her majeſty's renown'd,
Though uncoift, counſel, learned in the world!
Who think'ſt thyſelf a Murray, with diſdain
May'ſt look on me. Yet, my Demoſthenes!
Canſt thou plead pleaſure's cauſe as well as I?
Know'ſt thou her nature, purpoſe, parentage?
Attend my ſong, and thou ſhalt know them all;
And know thyſelf; and know thyſelf to be
(Strange truth!) the moſt abſtemious man alive.
Tell not Caliſta; ſhe will laugh thee dead;
Or ſend thee to her hermitage with L——.
Abſurd preſumption! thou, who never knew'ſt
A ſerious thought! ſhalt thou dare dream of joy?
No man e'er found a happy life by chance,
Or yawn'd it into being, with a wiſh;
Or, with the ſnout of grov'ling appetite,
E'er ſmelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
An art it is, and muſt be learn'd; and learn'd

With unremitting effort, or be loſt;
And leaves us perfect blockheads, in our bliſs.
The clouds may drop down titles and eſtates;
Wealth may ſeek us; but wiſdom muſt be ſought;
Sought before all; but (how unlike all elſe
We ſeek on earth!) 'tis never ſought in vain.
Firſt, pleaſure's birth, riſe, ſtrength, and grandeur ſee:
Brought forth by wiſdom, nurs'd by diſcipline,
By patience taught, by perſeverance crown'd,
She rears her head majeſtic; round her throne,
Erected in the boſom of the juſt,
Each virtue, liſted, forms her manly guard.
For what are virtues? (formidable name!)
What, but the fountain, or defence, of joy?
Why, then, commanded? need mankind commands,
At once to merit, and to make, their bliſs?—
Great legiſlator! ſcarce ſo great, as kind!
If men are rational, and love delight,
Thy gracious law but flatters human choice;
In the tranſgreſſion lies the penalty;
And they the moſt indulge, who moſt obey.
Of pleaſure, next, the final cauſe explore;
Its mighty purpoſe, its important end.
Not to turn human brutal, but to build
Divine on human, pleaſure came from heav'n.
In aid to reaſon was the goddeſs ſent;
To call up all its ſtrength by ſuch a charm.
Pleaſure, firſt, ſuccours virtue; in return,
Virtue gives pleaſure an eternal reign.
What, but the pleaſure of food, friendſhip, faith,
Supports life nat'ral, civil, and divine?

'Tis from the pleaſure of repaſt, we live;
'Tis from the pleaſure of applauſe, we pleaſe;
'Tis from the pleaſure of belief, we pray;
(All pray'r would ceaſe, if unbeliev'd the prize:)
It ſerves ourſelves, our ſpecies, and our God;
And to ſerve more is paſt the ſphere of man.
Glide, then, for ever, pleaſure's ſacred ſtream!
Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
And foſters ev'ry growth of happy life;
Makes a new Eden where it flows—but ſuch
As muſt be loſt, Lorenzo! by thy fall.
'What mean I by thy fall?'—Thoul't ſhortly ſee,
While pleaſure's nature is at large diſplay'd;
Already ſung her origin, and ends.
Thoſe glorious ends, by kind, or by degree,
When pleaſure violates, 'tis then a vice,
And vengeance too; it haſtens into pain.
From due refreſhment, life, health, reaſon, joy;
From wild exceſs, pain, grief, diſtraction, death;
Heav'n's juſtice this proclaims, and that her love.
What greater evil can I wiſh my foe,
Than his full draught of pleaſure, from a caſk
Unbroach'd by juſt authority, ungaug'd
By temperance, by reaſon unrefin'd?
A thouſand daemons lurk within the lee.
Heav'n, others, and ourſelves! uninjur'd theſe,
Drink deep; the deeper, then, the more divine;
Angels are angels from indulgence there;
'Tis unrepenting pleaſure makes a god.
Doſt think thyſelf a god from other joys?
A victim rather, ſhortly ſure to bleed.

The wrong muſt mourn : Can heav'n's appointments
fail ?
Can man outwit Omnipotence ? ſtrike out
A ſelf-wrought happineſs unmeant by him
Who made us, and the world we would enjoy ?
Who forms an inſtrument, ordains from whence
Its diſſonance, or harmony, ſhall riſe.
Heav'n bid the ſoul this mortal frame inſpire;
Bid virtue's ray divine inſpire the ſoul
With unprecarious flows of vital joy ;
And, without breathing, man as well might hope
For life, as, without piety, for peace.
' Is virtue, then, and piety the ſame ?
No ; piety is more ; 'tis virtue's ſource ;
Mother of ev'ry worth, as that of joy.
Men of the world this doctrine ill digeſt ;
They ſmile at piety ; yet boaſt aloud
Good will to men ; nor know they ſtrive to part
What nature joins ; and thus confute themſelves.
With piety begins all good on earth ;
'Tis the firſt-born of rationality.
Conſcience, her firſt law broken, wounded lies ;
Enfeebled, lifeleſs, impotent to good ;
A feign'd affection bounds her utmoſt pow'r.
Some we can't love, but for th' Almighty's ſake ;
A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man :
Some ſiniſter intent taints all he does,
And, in his kindeſt actions, he's unkind.
On piety, humanity is built ;
And, on humanity, much happineſs ;
And yet ſtill more on piety itſelf
A ſoul in commerce with her God, is heav'n ;

Feels not the tumults and the ſhocks of life;
The whirls of paſſions, and the ſtrokes of heart.
A Deity believ'd, is joy begun;
A deity ador'd, is joy advanc'd;
A Deity belov'd, is joy matur'd.
Each branch of piety delight inſpires;
Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
O'er death's dark gulph, and all its horror hides;
Praiſe, the ſweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it ſweeter ſtill;
Pray'r ardent opens heav'n, lets down a ſtream
Of glory on the conſecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.
Who worſhips the Great God, that inſtant joins
The firſt in heav'n, and ſets his foot on hell.

Lorenzo! when waſt thou at church before?
Thou think'ſt the ſervice long: But is it juſt?
Though juſt, unwelcome: Thou hadſt rather tread
Unhallow'd ground; the muſe, to win thine ear,
Muſt take an air leſs ſolemn. She complies.
Good conſcience! at the ſound the world retires;
Verſe diſaffects it, and Lorenzo ſmiles;
Yet has ſhe her ſeraglio full of charms;
And ſuch as age ſhall heighten, not impair.
Art thou dejected? is thy mind o'ercaſt?
Amid her fair ones, thou the faireſt chuſe,
To chace thy gloom.—'Go, fix ſome weighty truth;
'Chain down ſome paſſion; do ſome gen'rous good;
'Teach ignorance to ſee, or grief to ſmile;
'Correct thy friend, befriend thy greateſt foe;
'Or, with warm heart, and confidence divine,

'Spring up, and lay ſtrong hold on him who made
thee.'—
Thy gloom is ſcatter'd, ſprightly ſpirits flow;
Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unſtrung.
Doſt call the bowl, the viol, and the dance,
Loud mirth, mad laughter? wretched comforters!
Phyſicians! more than half of thy diſeaſe.
Laughter, though never cenſur'd yet as ſin,
(Pardon a thought that only ſeems ſevere)
Is half-immortal: Is it much much indulg'd?
By venting ſpleen, or diſſipating thought,
It ſhews a ſcorner, or it makes a fool;
And ſins, as hurting others, as ourſelves.
'Tis pride, or emptineſs, applies the ſtraw,
That tickles little minds to mirth effuſe;
Of grief approaching, the portentuous ſign!
The houſe of laughter makes a houſe of woe.
A man triumphant is a monſtrous ſight;
A man dejected is a ſight as mean.
What cauſe for triumph, where ſuch ills abound?
What for dejection, where preſides a pow'r,
Who call'd us into being to be bleſs'd?
So grieve, as conſcious grief may riſe to joy;
So joy, as conſcious joy to grief may fall.
Moſt true, a wiſe man never will be ſad;
But neither will ſonorous, bubbling mirth,
A ſhallow ſtream of happineſs betray:
Too happy to be ſportive, he's ſerene.
Yet wouldſt thou laugh (but at thy own expence)
This counſel ſtrange ſhould I preſume to give—
'Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay.'
There truths abound of ſov'reign aid to peace;

Ah! do not prize them leſs, becauſe inſpir'd,
As thou, and thine, are apt and proud to do.
If not inſpir'd, that pregnant page had ſtood,
Time's treaſure! and the wonder of the wiſe!
Thou think'ſt, perhaps, thy ſoul alone at ſtake;
Alas!—ſhould men miſtake thee for a fool;—
What man of taſte for genius, wiſdom, truth,
Tho' tender of thy fame, could interpoſe?
Believe me, ſenſe here acts a double part,
And the true critic is a Chriſtian too.
But theſe, thou think'ſt, are gloomy paths to joy.—
True joy in ſunſhine ne'er was found at firſt;
They, firſt, themſelves offend, who greatly pleaſe;
And travel only gives us ſound repoſe.
Heav'n ſells all pleaſure; effort is the price;
The joys of conqueſt are the joys of man;
And glory the victorious laurel ſpreads
O'er pleaſure's pure, perpetual, placid ſtream.
There is a time, when toil muſt be preferr'd,
Or joy, by miſ-tim'd fondneſs, is undone.
A man of pleaſure is a man of pains.
Thou wilt not take the trouble to be bleſs'd.
Falſe joys, indeed, are born from want of thought;
From thought's full bent, and energy, the true;
And that demands a mind in equal poiſe,
Remote from gloomy grief, and glaring joy.
Much joy not only ſpeaks ſmall happineſs,
But happineſs, that ſhortly muſt expire.
Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, ſtand?
And, in a tempeſt, can reflection live?
Can joy, like thine, ſecure itſelf an hour?
Can joy, like thine, meet accident unſhock'd?

Or ope the door to honeſt poverty?
Or talk with threat'ning death, and not turn pale?
In ſuch a world, and ſuch a nature, theſe
Are needful fundamentals of delight;
Theſe fundamentals, give delight indeed;
Delight, pure, delicate, and durable;
Delight, unſhaken, maſculine, divine;
A conſtant, and a ſound, but ſerious joy.
Is joy the daughter of ſeverity?
It is:—But far my doctrine from ſevere.
'Rejoice for ever:' It becomes a man;
Exalts, and ſets him nearer to the gods.
'Rejoice for ever,' nature cries, 'Rejoice;'
And drinks to man, in her nectareous cup,
Mix'd up of delicates for ev'ry ſenſe:
To the great founder of the bounteous feaſt,
Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praiſe;
And he that will not pledge her, is a churl.
Ill firmly to ſupport, good fully taſte,
Is the whole ſcience of felicity:
Yet ſparing pledge: Her bowl is not the beſt
Mankind can boaſt.—'A rational repaſt;
'Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,
'A military diſcipline of thought,
'To foil temptation in the doubtful field;
'And ever-waking ardour for the right.'
'Tis theſe firſt give, then guard, a chearful heart.
Nought that is right, think little; well aware,
What reaſon bids, GOD bids; by His command
How aggrandiz'd, the ſmalleſt thing we do!
Thus, nothing is inſipid to the wiſe;

To thee, inſipid all, but what is mad;
Joys ſeaſon'd high, and taſting ſtrong of guilt.
' Mad! (thou reply'ſt, with indignation fir'd)
' Of antient ſages proud to tread the ſteps,
' I follow nature.'—Follow nature ſtill,
But look it be thine own: Is conſcience, then,
No part of nature? is ſhe not ſupreme?
Thou regicide! O raiſe her from the dead!
Then, follow nature; and reſemble GOD.
When, ſpite of conſcience, pleaſure is purſu'd,
Man's nature is unnaturally pleas'd:
And what's unnatural, is painful too
At intervals, and muſt diſguſt ev'n thee!
The fact thou know'ſt; but not, perhaps, the cauſe.
Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid;
Heav'n mix'd her with our make, and twiſted cloſe
Her ſacred int'reſts with the ſtrings of life.
Who breaks her awful mandate, ſhocks himſelf,
His better ſelf: And is it greater pain,
Our ſoul ſhould murmur, or our duſt repine?
And one, in their eternal war, muſt bleed.
If one muſt ſuffer, which ſhould leaſt be ſpar'd?
The pains of mind ſurpaſs the pains of ſenſe:
Aſk, then, the gout, what torment is in guilt,
The joys of ſenſe to mental joys are mean:
Senſe on the preſent only feeds; the ſoul
On paſt, and future, forages for joy.
'Tis her's, by retroſpect, thro' time to range;
And forward time's great ſequel to ſurvey.
Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,
Axes might ruſt, and racks, and gibbets, fall:
Guard, then, thy mind, and leave the reſt to fate.

Lorenzo! wilt thou never be a man?
The man is dead, who for the body lives,
Lur'd, by the beating of his pulſe, to liſt
With ev'ry luſt, that wars againſt his peace;
And ſets him quite at variance with himſelf.
Thyſelf, firſt, know; then love: A ſelf there is
Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.
A ſelf there is, as fond of ev'ry vice,
While ev'ry virtue wounds it to the heart;
Humility degrades it, juſtice robs,
Bleſs'd bounty beggars it, fair truth betrays,
And godlike magnanimity deſtroys.
This ſelf, when rival to the former, ſcorn;
When not in competition, kindly treat,
Defend it, feed it:—But when virtue bids,
Toſs it, or to the fowls, or to the flames.
And why? 'tis love of pleaſure bids thee bleed;
Comply, or own ſelf-love extinct, or blind.
For what is vice? ſelf-love in a miſtake:
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And virtue, what? 'tis ſelf-love in her wits,
Quite ſkilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good ſenſe is love of that dread pow'r,
From whom herſelf, and all ſhe can enjoy.
Other ſelf-love is but diſguis'd ſelf-hate;
More mortal than the malice of our foes;
A ſelf-hate, now, ſcarce felt; then felt full-ſore,
When being, curſt; extinction, loud-implor'd;
And ev'ry thing preferr'd to what we are.
Yet this ſelf-love Lorenzo makes his choice;
And, in this choice triumphant, boaſts of joy.
How is his want of happineſs betray'd,

To thee, insipid all, but what is mad;
Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.
' Mad! (thou reply'st, with indignation fir'd)
' Of antient sages proud to tread the steps,
' I follow nature.'—Follow nature still,
But look it be thine own: Is conscience, then,
No part of nature? is she not supreme?
Thou regicide! O raise her from the dead!
Then, follow nature; and resemble GOD.
When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursu'd,
Man's nature is unnaturally pleas'd:
And what's unnatural, is painful too
At intervals, and must disgust ev'n thee!
The fact thou know'st; but not, perhaps, the cause.
Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid;
Heav'n mix'd her with our make, and twisted close
Her sacred int'rests with the strings of life.
Who breaks her awful mandate, shocks himself,
His better self: And is it greater pain,
Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine?
And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.
If one must suffer, which should least be spar'd?
The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense:
Ask, then, the gout, what torment is in guilt,
The joys of sense to mental joys are mean:
Sense on the present only feeds; the soul
On past, and future, forages for joy.
'Tis her's, by retrospect, thro' time to range;
And forward time's great sequel to survey.
Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,
Axes might rust, and racks, and gibbets, fall:
Guard, then, thy mind, and leave the rest to fate.

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A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And virtue, what? 'tis ſelf-love in her wits,
Quite ſkilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good ſenſe is love of that dread pow'r,
From whom herſelf, and all ſhe can enjoy.
Other ſelf-love is but diſguis'd ſelf-hate;
More mortal than the malice of our foes;
A ſelf-hate, now, ſcarce felt; then felt full-ſore,
When being, curſt; extinction, loud-implor'd;
And ev'ry thing preferr'd to what we are.
Yet this ſelf-love Lorenzo makes his choice;
And, in this choice triumphant, boaſts of joy.
How is his want of happineſs betray'd,

By disaffection to the present hour!
Imagination wanders far a-field:
The future pleases: Why? the present pains.—
'But that's a secret.'—Yes, which all men know;
And know from thee, discover'd unawares.
Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause;
What is it?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,
From instinct sent, to rock her in disease,
Which her physician, reason, will not cure.
A poor expedient! yet thy best; and while
It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.
Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies!
The weak have remedies; the wise have joys.
Superior wisdom is superior bliss.
And what sure mark distinguishes the wise?
Consistent wisdom ever wills the same;
Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.
Sick of herself, is folly's character;
As wisdom's is, a modest self-applause.
A change of evils is thy good supreme;
Nor, but in motion, canst thou find thy rest.
Man's greatest strength is shewn in standing still.
The first sure symptom of a mind in health,
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
False pleasure from abroad her joys imports;
Rich from within, and self-sustain'd, the true.
The true is fix'd, and solid as a rock;
Slipp'ry the false, and tossing, as the wave.
This, a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain;
That, like the fabl'd, self-enamour'd boy,
Home-contemplation her supreme delight;

She dreads an interruption from without,
Smit with her own condition; and the more
Intenſe ſhe gazes, ſtill it charms the more.
No man is happy, till he thinks, on earth
There breathes not a more happy than himſelf:
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all;
And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.
Such angels all, intitled to repoſe
On him who governs fate: Tho' tempeſt frowns,
Tho' nature ſhakes, how ſoft to lean on heav'n!
To lean on Him, on whom arch-angels lean!
With inward eyes, and ſilent as the grave,
They ſtand collecting ev'ry beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight;
For all their thoughts, like angels, ſeen of old
In Iſrael's dream, come from, and go to, heav'n;
Hence, are they ſtudious of ſequeſtred ſcenes;
While noiſe, and diſſipation, comfort thee.
Were all men happy, revellings would ceaſe,
That opiate for inquietude within.
Lorenzo! never man was truly bleſs'd,
But it compos'd, and gave him ſuch a caſt,
As folly might miſtake for want of joy.
A caſt, unlike the triumph of the proud;
A modeſt aſpect, and a ſmile at heart.
O for a joy from thy Philander's ſpring!
A ſpring perennial, riſing in the breaſt,
And permanent, as pure! no turbid ſtream
Of rapt'rous exultation, ſwelling high;
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour a while,
Then ſink at once, and leave us in the mire.

What does the man, who tranſient joy prefers?
What, but prefer the bubbles to the ſtream?
Vain are all ſudden ſallies of delight;
Convulſions of a weak diſtemper'd joy.
Joy's a fix'd ſtate; a tenure, not a ſtart.
Bliſs there is none, but unprecarious bliſs:
That is the gem: Sell all, and purchaſe that.
Why go a begging to contingencies,
Not gain'd with eaſe, nor ſafely lov'd, if gain'd?
At good fortuitous, draw back, and pauſe;
Suſpect it; what thou canſt enſure, enjoy;
And nought but what thou giv'ſt thyſelf, is ſure.
Reaſon perpetuates joy that reaſon gives,
And makes it as immortal as herſelf;
To mortals, nought immortal, but their worth.
Worth, conſcious worth! ſhould abſolutely reign;
And other joys aſk leave for their approach;
Nor, unexamin'd, ever leave obtain.
Thou art all anarchy; a mob of joys
Wage war, and periſh in inteſtine broils;
Not the leaſt promiſe of internal peace!
No boſom-comfort! or unborrow'd bliſs!
Thy thoughts are vagabonds; all outward-bound,
'Mid ſands, and rocks, and ſtorms, to cruiſe for pleaſure;
If gain'd, dear-bought; and better miſs'd than gain'd.
Much pain muſt expiate, what much pain procur'd.
Fancy, and ſenſe, from an infected ſhore,
Thy cargo bring; and peſtilence the prize.
Then, ſuch thy thirſt, (inſatiable thirſt!
By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more)
Fancy ſtill cruiſes, when poor ſenſe is tir'd.

Imagination is the Paphian ſhop,
Where feeble happineſs, like Vulcan, lame,
Bids foul ideas, in their dark receſs,
And hot as hell, (which kindled the black fires)
With wanton art, thoſe fatal arrows form,
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
Wouldſt thou receive them, other thoughts there are,
On angel-wing, deſcending from above,
Which theſe, with art divine, would counterwork,
And form celeſtial armour for thy peace.
In this is ſeen imagination's guilt;
But who can count her ſollies? ſhe betrays thee,
To think in grandeur there is ſomething great.
For works of curious art, and antient fame,
Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd;
And foreign climes muſt cater for thy taſte.
Hence, what diſaſter!—tho' the price was paid,
That perſecuting prieſt, the Turk of Rome,
Whoſe foot, (ye gods!) tho' cloven, muſt be kiſs'd,
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian ſhore;
(Such is the fate of honeſt Proteſtants!)
And poor magnificence is ſtarv'd to death.
Hence juſt reſentment, indignation, ire!—
Be pacify'd; if outward things are great,
'Tis magnanimity great things to ſcorn;
Pompous expences, and parades auguſt,
And courts; that inſalubrious ſoil to peace.
True happineſs ne'er enter'd at an eye;
True happineſs reſides in things unſeen.
No ſmiles of fortune ever bleſt the bad,
Nor can her frowns rob innocence of joys;

That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor:
So tell his Holineſs, and be reveng'd.
Pleaſure, we both agree, is man's chief good;
Our only conteſt, what deſerves the name.
Give pleaſure's name to nought, but what has paſs'd
Th' authentic ſeal of reaſon (which, like Yorke,
Demurs on what it paſſes) and defies
The tooth of time; when paſt, a pleaſure ſtill:
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes
Our future, while it forms, our preſent, joy.
Some joys the future overcaſt; and ſome
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
Some joys endear eternity; ſome give
Abhorr'd annihilation dreadful charms.
Are rival joys contending for thy choice?
Conſult thy whole exiſtence, and be ſafe;
That oracle will put all doubt to flight.
Short is the leſſon, tho' my lecture long,
Be good——and let heav'n anſwer for the reſt.
Yet, with a ſigh o'er all mankind, I grant
In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
The good man has his clouds that intervene;
Clouds, that obſcure his ſublunary day,
But never conquer: Ev'n the beſt muſt own,
Patience, and reſignation, are the pillars
Of human peace on earth. The pillars, theſe:
But thoſe of Seth not more remote from thee,
Till this heroic leſſon thou haſt learnt;
To frown at pleaſure, and to ſmile in pain.
Fir'd at the proſpect of unclouded bliſs,
Heav'n in reverſion, like the ſun, as yet

Beneath th' horizon, chears us in this world;
It ſheds, on ſouls ſuſceptible of light,
The glorious dawn of our eternal day.
'This (ſays Lorenzo) is a fair harangue:
'But can harangues blow back ſtrong nature's ſtream:
'Or ſtem the tide heav'n puſhes thro' our veins,
'Which ſweeps away man's impotent reſolves,
'And lays his labour level with the world?'
Themſelves men make their comment on mankind;
And think nought is, but what they find at home:
Thus, weakneſs to chimaera turns the truth.
Nothing romantic has the muſe preſcrib'd.
* Above, Lorenzo ſaw the man of earth,
The mortal man; and wretched was the ſight.
To balance that, to comfort, and exalt,
Now ſee the man immortal: Him, I mean,
Who lives as ſuch; whoſe heart, full-bent on heav'n,
Leans all that way, his bias to the ſtars.
The world's dark ſhades, in contraſt ſet, ſhall raiſe
His luſtre more; tho' bright, without a foil:
Obſerve his awful portrait, and admire;
Nor ſtop at wonder: Imitate, and live.
Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing leſs than angel can exceed,
A man on earth devoted to the ſkies,
Like ſhips in ſeas, while in, above the world.
With aſpect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him ſeated on a mount ſerene,
Above the fogs of ſenſe, and paſſion's ſtorm;
All the black cares, and tumults, of this life,

* In a former night.

Like harmleſs thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
Earth's genuine ſons, the ſcepter'd, and the ſlave,
A mingl'd mob! a wand'ring herd! he ſees
Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike!
His full reverſe in all! what higher praiſe?
What ſtronger demonſtration of the right?
The preſent all their care; the future, his.
When public welfare calls, or private want,
They give to fame; his bounty he conceals.
Their virtues varniſh nature; his exalt.
Mankind's eſteem they court; and he, his own.
Theirs, the wild chaſe of falſe felicities;
His, the compos'd poſſeſſion of the true.
Alike throughout is his conſiſtent peace,
All of one colour, and an even thread;
While party-colour'd ſhreds of happineſs,
With hideous gaps between, patch up for them
A madman's robe; each puff of fortune blows
The tatters by, and ſhews their nakedneſs.
He ſees with other eyes than theirs: Where they
Behold a ſun, he ſpies a Deity;
What makes them only ſmile, makes him adore.
Where they ſee mountains, he but atoms ſees;
An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.
They things terreſtrial worſhip, as divine;
His hopes immortal blow them by, as duſt,
That dims his ſight, and ſhortens his ſurvey,
Which longs, in infinite, to loſe all bound.
Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)
He lays aſide to find his dignity;
No dignity they find in aught beſides.

They triumph in externals (which conceal
Man's real glory) proud of an eclipſe.
Himſelf too much he prizes to be proud,
And nothing thinks ſo great in man, as man.
Too dear he holds his intereſt, to neglect
Another's welfare, or his right invade;
Their int'reſt, like a lion, lives on prey.
They kindle at the ſhadow of a wrong;
Wrong he ſuſtains with temper, looks on heav'n,
Nor ſtoops to think his injurer his foe;
Nought, but what wounds his virtue, wounds his peace.
A cover'd heart their character defends;
A cover'd heart denies him half his praiſe.
With nakedneſs his innocence agrees;
While their broad foliage teſtifies their fall.
Their no-joys end, where his full feaſt begins;
His joys create, theirs murder, future bliſs.
To triumph in exiſtence his alone;
And his alone, triumphantly to think
His true exiſtence is not yet begun:
His glorious courſe was, yeſterday, complete;
Death, then, was welcome; yet life ſtill is ſweet.
But nothing charms Lorenzo, like the firm,
Undaunted breaſt—— And whoſe is that high praiſe!
They yield to pleaſure, tho' they danger brave,
And ſhew no fortitude, but in the field;
If there they ſhew it, 'tis for glory ſhewn;
Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.
A cordial his ſuſtains, that cannot fail;
By pleaſure unſubdu'd, unbroke by pain,
He ſhares in that omnipotence he truſts.

All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls;
And when he falls, writes VICI on his ſhield.
From magnanimity, all fear above;
From nobler recompence, above applauſe;
Which owes to man's ſhort out-look all its charms.
Backward to credit what he never felt,
Lorenzo cries,—— 'Where ſhines this miracle?
'From what root riſes this immortal man?'
A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground;
The root diſſect, nor wonder at the flower.
He follows nature (not like † thee;) and ſhews us
An uninverted ſyſtem of a man.
His appetite wears reaſon's golden chain,
And finds, in due reſtraint, its luxury.
His paſſion, like an eagle well reclaim'd,
Is taught to fly at nought, but infinite.
Patient his hope, un-anxious is his care,
His caution fearleſs, and his grief, (if grief
The gods ordain) a ſtranger to deſpair.
And why?—becauſe affection, more than meet,
His wiſdom leaves not diſengag'd from heaven.
Thoſe ſecondary goods that ſmile on earth,
He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
They moſt the world enjoy, who leaſt admire.
His underſtanding ſcapes the common cloud
Of fumes, ariſing from a boiling breaſt.
His head is clear, becauſe his heart is cool,
By worldly competitions uninflam'd.
The mod'rate movements of his ſoul admit
Diſtinct ideas, and matur'd debate,

† See p. 88. line 5.

An eye impartial, and an even ſcale;
Whence judgment ſound, and unrepenting choice.
Thus, in a double ſenſe, the good are wiſe;
On its own dunghill, wiſer than the world.
What, then, the world? it muſt be doubly weak;
Strange truth! as ſoon would they believe their creed.
Yet thus it is; nor otherwiſe can be;
So far from aught romantic, what I ſing.
Bliſs has no being, virtue has no ſtrength,
But from the proſpect of immortal life.
Who thinks earth all, or, (what weighs juſt the ſame)
Who care no farther, muſt prize what it yields;
Fond of its fancies; proud of its parades.
Who thinks earth nothing, can't its charms admire;
He can't a foe, tho' moſt malignant, hate,
Becauſe that hate would prove his greater foe.
'Tis hard for them (yet who ſo loudly boaſt
Good-will to men?) to love their deareſt friend;
For may not he invade their good ſupreme,
Where the leaſt jealouſy turns love to gall?
All ſhines to them, that for a ſeaſon ſhines.
Each act, each thought, he queſtions, 'What its weight,
'Its colour what; a thouſand ages hence?'——
And what it there appears, he deems it now.
Hence, pure are the receſſes of his ſoul.
The god-like man has nothing to conceal.
His virtue, conſtitutionally deep,
His habit's firmneſs, and affection's flame;
Angels, ally'd, deſcend to feed the fire;
And death, which others ſlay, makes him a god.
And now; Lorenzo! bigot of this world!
Wont to diſdain poor bigots caught by heav'n!

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And now; Lorenzo! bigot of this world!
Wont to diſdain poor bigots caught by heav'n!

Stand by thy ſcorn, and be reduc'd to nought:
For what art thou?—Thou boaſter! while thy glare,
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
Like a broad miſt, at diſtance, ſtrikes us moſt;
And, like a miſt, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and riſes nearer to the ſkies,
By promiſe, now, and, by poſſeſſion, ſoon,
(Too ſoon, too much, it cannot be) his own.
From this thy juſt annihilation riſe,
Lorenzo! riſe to ſomething, by reply.
The world, thy client, liſtens, and expects;
And longs to crown thee with immortal praiſe.
Can'ſt thou be ſilent? no; for wit is thine;
And wit talks moſt, when leaſt ſhe has to ſay,
And reaſon interrupts not her career.
She'll ſay—That miſts above the mountains riſe;
And, with a thouſand pleaſantries, amuſe;
She'll ſparkle, puzzle, flutter, raiſe a duſt,
And fly conviction, in the duſt ſhe rais'd.
Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taſte!——
'Tis precious, as the vehicle of ſenſe;
But, as its ſubſtitute, a dire diſeaſe.
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world,
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.
Wiſdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;
Paſſion can give it; ſometimes wine inſpires
The lucky flaſh; and madneſs rarely fails.
Whatever cauſe the ſpirit ſtrongly ſtirs,
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.
For thy renown, 'twere well, was this the worſt;
Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,

See dullneſs, blund'ring on vivacities,
Shakes her ſage head at the calamity,
Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.
But wiſdom; awful wiſdom! which inſpects,
Diſcerns, compares, weighs, ſeparates, infers,
Seizes the right, and holds it to the laſt;
How rare! in ſenates, ſynods, ſought in vain;
Or if there found, 'tis ſacred to the few;
While a lewd proſtitute to multitudes,
Frequent, as fatal, wit: In civil life,
Wit makes an enterprizer; ſenſe, a man.
Wit hates authority; commotion loves,
And thinks herſelf the lightning of the ſtorm.
In ſtates, 'tis dang'rous; in religion, death:
Shall wit turn Chriſtian, when the dull believe?
Senſe is our helmet, wit is but the plume;
The plume expoſes, 'tis our helmet ſaves.
Senſe is the diamond, weighty, ſolid, ſound;
When cut by wit, it caſts a brighter beam;
Yet, wit apart, it is a diamond ſtill.
Wit, widow'd of good ſenſe, is worſe than nought;
It hoiſts more ſail, to run againſt a rock.
Thus, a half-Cheſterfield is quite a fool;
Whom dull fools ſcorn, and bleſs their want of wit.
How ruinous the rock! I warn thee ſhun,
Where Syrens ſit, to ſing thee to thy fate!
A joy, in which our reaſon bears no part,
Is but a ſorrow tickling, ere it ſtings.
Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;
Which of her lovers ever found her true?
Happy! of this bad world who little know!—
And yet, we much muſt know her, to be ſafe.

To know the world, not love her, is thy point;
She gives but little, nor that little, long.
There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulſe;
A dance of ſpirits, a mere froth of joy,
Our thoughtleſs agitation's idle child,
That mantles high, that ſparkles, and expires,
Leaving the ſoul more vapid than before.
An animal ovation! ſuch as holds
No commerce with our reaſon, but ſubſiſts
On juices, thro' the well-ton'd tubes, well-ſtrain'd;
A nice machine! ſcarce ever tun'd aright;
And when it jars——thy Syrens ſing no more,
Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown
(Short apotheoſis!) beneath the man,
In coward gloom immers'd, or fell deſpair.

Art thou yet dull enough deſpair to dread,
And ſtartle at deſtruction? If thou art,
Accept a buckler, take it to the field;
(A field of battle is this mortal life!)
When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart;
A ſingle ſentence proof againſt the world.
'Soul, body, fortune! ev'ry good pertains
'To one of theſe; but prize not all alike;
'The goods of fortune to thy body's health,
'Body to ſoul, and ſoul ſubmit to God.'
Would'ſt thou build laſting happineſs? do this;
Th' inverted pyramid can never ſtand.

Is this truth doubtful? it outſhines the ſun;
Nay, the ſun ſhines not, but to ſhew us this,
The ſingle leſſon of mankind on earth.
And yet—yet, what? no news! mankind is mad;
Such mighty numbers liſt againſt the right,

(And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, atchieve?)
They talk themſelves to ſomething like belief,
That all earth's joys are theirs: As Athens' fool
Grinn'd from the port, on ev'ry ſail his own.
They grin; but wherefore? and how long the laugh?
Half ignorance, their mirth; and half a lye;
To cheat the world, and cheat themſelves, they ſmile.
Hard either taſk! the moſt abandon'd own,
That others, if abandon'd, are undone:
Then, for themſelves, the moment reaſon wakes,
(And Providence denies it long repoſe)
O how laborious is their gaiety!
They ſcarce can ſwallow their ebullient ſpleen,
Scarce muſter patience to ſupport the farce,
And pump ſad laughter, till the curtain falls.
Scarce, did I ſay? ſome cannot ſit it out;
Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,
And ſhew us what their joy, by their deſpair.
The clotted hair! gor'd breaſt! blaſpheming eye!
Its impious fury ſtill alive in death!—
Shut, ſhut the ſhocking ſcene.—But heav'n denies
A cover to ſuch guilt; and ſo ſhould man.
Look round, Lorenzo! ſee the reeking blade;
Th' invenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;
The ſtrangling cord, and ſuffocating ſtream;
The loathſome rottenneſs, and foul decays
From raging riot (ſlower ſuicides!)
And pride in theſe, more execrable ſtill!—
How horrid all to thought!—but horrors, theſe,
That vouch the truth; and aid my feeble ſong.

From vice, ſenſe, fancy, no man can be bleſs'd:
Bliſs is too great, to lodge within an hour:
When an immortal being aims at bliſs,
Duration is eſſential to the name.
O for a joy from reaſon! joy from that,
Which makes man man; and, exercis'd aright,
Will make him more: A bounteous joy! that gives,
And promiſes; that weaves, with art divine,
The richeſt proſpect into preſent peace:
A joy ambitious! joy in common held
With thrones aetherial, and their greater far:
A joy high-privileg'd from chance, time, death!
A joy, which death ſhall double! judgment crown!
Crown'd higher, and ſtill higher, at each ſtage,
Through bleſs'd eternity's long day; yet ſtill,
Not more remote from ſorrow, than from him,
Whoſe laviſh hand, whoſe love ſtupendous, pours
So much of deity on guilty duſt,
There, O my Lucia! may I meet thee there,
Where not thy preſence can improve my bliſs!
Affects not this the ſages of the world?
Can nought affect them, but what fools them too?
Eternity, depending on an hour,
Makes ſerious thought man's wiſdom, joy, and praiſe.
Nor need you bluſh (though ſometimes your deſigns
May ſhun the light) at your deſigns on heav'n:
Sole point! where over-baſhful is your blame.
Are you not wiſe?—You know you are: Yet hear
One truth, amid your num'rous ſchemes, miſlaid,
Or overlook'd, or thrown aſide, if ſeen;
'Our ſchemes to plan by this world, or the next,
'Is the ſole diff'rence between wiſe and fool.'

All worthy men will weigh you in this ſcale;
What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light?
Is their eſteem alone not worth your care?
Accept my ſimple ſcheme of common ſenſe;
Thus, ſave your fame, and make two worlds your own.

The world replies not;—but the world perſiſts;
And puts the cauſe off to the longeſt day,
Planning evaſions for the day of doom.
So far, at that re-hearing, from redreſs,
They then turn witneſſes againſt themſelves.
Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wiſe to-morrow.
Haſte, haſte! a man, by nature, is in haſte;
For who ſhall anſwer for another hour?
'Tis highly prudent, to make one ſure friend;
And that thou can'ſt not do, this ſide the ſkies.

Ye ſons of earth! (nor willing to be more!)
Since verſe you think from prieſtcraft ſomewhat free,
Thus, in an age ſo gay, the muſe plain truths
(Truths, which, at church, you might have had in proſe)
Has ventur'd into light; well-pleas'd the verſe
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain;
And crown her with your welfare, not your praiſe.
But praiſe ſhe need not fear: I ſee my fate;
And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulph.
Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
Muſt die; and die unwept; O thou minute,
Devoted page! go forth among thy foes;
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death: Mankind, incens'd,
Denies thee long to live: Nor ſhalt thou reſt,

When thou art dead; in Stygian ſhades arraign'd
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne;
And bold blaſphemer of his friend,—the world;
The world, whoſe legions coſt him ſlender pay,
And volunteers, around his banner ſwarm;
Prudent, as Pruſſia, in her zeal for Gaul.
'Are all, then, fools?' Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all,
But ſuch as hold this doctrine (new to thee;)
'The mother of true wiſdom is the will;'
The nobleſt intellect, a fool without it.
World-wiſdom much has done, and more may do,
In arts and ſciences, in wars, and peace;
But art and ſcience, like thy wealth, will leave thee,
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
This is the moſt indulgence can afford;—
'Thy wiſdom all can do, but—make thee wiſe.'
Nor think this cenſure is ſevere on thee;
Satan, thy maſter, I dare call a dunce.

NIGHT THE NINTH AND LAST.

THE

CONSOLATION.

Containing, among other things,

I. A Moral Survey of the Nocturnal Heavens.

II. A Night-addreſs to the DEITY.

Humbly inſcribed to his GRACE

THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE;

One of his Majeſty's Principal Secretaries of State.

——Fatis contraria fata rependens. VIRG.

NIGHT THE NINTH, AND LAST.

THE

CONSOLATION.

As when a traveller, a long day paſt
In painful ſearch of what he cannot find,
At night's approach, content with the next cot,
There ruminates, a while, his labour loſt;
Then chears his heart with what his fate affords,
And chants his ſonnet to deceive the time,
Till the due ſeaſon calls him to repoſe:
Thus I, long-travell'd in the ways of men,
And dancing, with the reſt, the giddy maze,
Where diſappointment ſmiles at hope's career;
Warn'd by the langour of life's ev'ning ray,
At length have hous'd me in an humble ſhed;
Where, future wand'ring baniſh'd from my thought,
And waiting, patient, the ſweet hour of reſt,
I chaſe the moments with a ſerious ſong.
Song ſoothes our pains, and age has pains to ſoothe.
When age, care, crime, and friends embrac'd at heart,
Torn from my bleeding breaſt, and death's dark ſhade,

Which hovers o'er me, quench th' aetherial fire;
Canſt thou, O Night! indulge one labour more?
One labour more indulge! then ſleep, my ſtrain!
Till, haply, wak'd by Raphael's golden lyre,
Where night, death, age, care, crime, and ſorrow, ceaſe;
To bear a part in everlaſting lays;
Tho' far, far higher ſet, in aim, I truſt;
Symphonious to this humble prelude here.
Has not the muſe aſſerted pleaſures pure,
Like thoſe above; exploding other joys?
Weigh what was urg'd, Lorenzo! fairly weigh;
And tell me, haſt thou cauſe to triumph ſtill?
I think, thou wilt forbear a boaſt ſo bold.
But if, beneath the favour of miſtake,
Thy ſmile's ſincere; not more ſincere can be
Lorenzo's ſmile, than my compaſſion for him.
The ſick in body call for aid; the ſick
In mind are covetous of more diſeaſe;
And when at worſt, they dream themſelves quite well.
To know ourſelves diſeas'd, is half our cure.
When nature's bluſh by cuſtom is wip'd off,
And conſcience, deaden'd by repeated ſtrokes,
Has into manners naturaliz'd our crimes;
The curſe of curſes is, our curſe to love;
To triumph in the blackneſs of our guilt,
(As Indians glory in the deepeſt jet;)
And throw aſide our ſenſes, with our peace.
But grant no guilt, no ſhame, no leaſt alloy;
Grant joy and glory, quite unſully'd, ſhone;
Yet, ſtill, it ill deſerves Lorenzo's heart.
No joy, no glory, glitters in thy ſight,

But, thro' the thin partition of an hour,
I ſee its ſables wove by deſtiny ;
And that in ſorrow bury'd ; this, in ſhame ;
While howling furies ring the doleful knell ;
And conſcience, now ſo ſoft thou ſcarce canſt hear
Her whiſper, echoes her eternal peal.

Where, the prime actors of the laſt year's ſcene ;
Their port ſo proud, their buſkin, and their plume ?
How many ſleep, who kept the world awake
With luſtre, and with noiſe ! has death proclaim'd
A truce, and hung his ſated lance on high ?
'Tis brandiſh'd ſtill ; nor ſhall the preſent year
Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
Or ſpread of feeble life a thinner fall.

But needleſs monuments to wake the thought ;
Life's gayeſt ſcenes ſpeak man's mortality ;
Tho' in a ſtile more florid, full as plain,
As mauſoleums, pyramids, and tombs.
What are our nobleſt ornaments, but deaths
Turn'd flatterers of life, in paint, or marble,
The well-ſtain'd canvaſs, or the featur'd ſtone ?
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the ſcene.
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.

' Profeſt diverſions ! cannot theſe eſcape ?'——
Far from it : Theſe preſent us with a ſhroud ;
And talk of death, like garlands o'er a grave.
As ſome bold plunderers, for bury'd wealth,
We ranſack tombs for paſtime ; from the duſt
Call up the ſleeping hero ; bid him tread
The ſcene for our amuſement : How like gods
We ſit ; and, wrapt in immortality,

Shed gen'rous tears on wretches born to die;
Their fate deploring, to forget our own!
What, all the pomps, and triumphs of our lives,
But legacies in bloſſom? our lean ſoil,
Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities,
From friends interr'd beneath; a rich manure!
Like other worms, we banquet on the dead;
Like other worms, ſhall we crawl on, nor know
Our preſent frailties, or approaching fate?
Lorenzo! ſuch the glories of the world!
What is the world itſelf? thy world?——a grave!
Where is the duſt that has not been alive?
The ſpade, the plough, diſturb our anceſtors;
From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth's hollow ſurface ſhakes,
And is the ceiling of her ſleeping ſons.
O'er devaſtation we blind revels keep;
Whole bury'd towns ſupport the dancer's heel.
The moiſt of human frame the ſun exhales;
Winds ſcatter, thro' the mighty void, the dry;
Earth repoſſeſſes part of what ſhe gave,
And the freed ſpirit mounts on wings of fire;
Each element partakes our ſcatter'd ſpoils;
As nature, wide, our ruins ſpread; man's death
Inhabits all things, but the thought of man.
Nor man alone; his breathing buſt expires,
His tomb is mortal; empires die: Where, now,
The Roman? Greek? they ſtalk, an empty name!
Yet few regard them in this uſeful light;
Tho' half our learning is their epitaph.
When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
That loves to wander in thy ſunleſs realms,

O death! I ſtretch my view; what viſions riſe!
What triumphs! toils imperial! arts divine!
In wither'd laurels glide before my ſight?
What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd-high
With human agitation, roll along
In unſubſtantial images of air!
The melancholy ghoſts of dead renown,
Whiſp'ring faint echoes of the world's applauſe:
With penitential aſpect, as they paſs,
All point at earth, and hiſs at human pride,
The wiſdom of the wiſe, and prancings of the great.
But, O Lorenzo! far the reſt above,
Of ghaſtly nature, and enormous ſize,
One form aſſaults my ſight, and chills my blood,
And ſhakes my frame. Of one departed world
I ſee the mighty ſhadow; oozy wreath
And diſmal ſea-weed crown her; o'er her urn
Reclin'd, ſhe weeps her deſolated realms,
And bloated ſons; and, weeping, propheſies
Another's diſſolution, ſoon, in flames.
But, like Caſſandra, propheſies in vain;
In vain, to many; not, I truſt, to thee.
For, know'ſt thou not, or art thou loth to know,
The great decree, the counſel of the ſkies?
Deluge and conflagration, dreadful powers!
Prime miniſters of vengeance! chain'd in caves
Diſtinct, apart the giant furies roar;
Apart; or, ſuch their horrid rage for ruin,
In mutual conflict would they riſe, and wage
Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.
But not for this, ordain'd their boundleſs rage;
When heav'n's inferior inſtruments of wrath,

War, famine, peſtilence, are found too weak
To ſcourge a world for her enormous crimes,
Theſe are let looſe alternate: Down they ruſh,
Swift and tempeſtuous, from th' eternal throne,
With irreſiſtible commiſſion arm'd,
The world, in vain corrected, to deſtroy,
And eaſe creation of the ſhocking ſcene.
Seeſt thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?
The fate of nature; as for man, her birth.
Earth's actors change earth's tranſitory ſcenes,
And make creation groan with human guilt.
How muſt it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
But not of waters! at the deſtin'd hour,
By the loud trumpet ſummon'd to the charge,
See, all the formidable ſons of fire,
Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, light'nings, play
Their various engines; all at once diſgorge
Their blazing magazines; and take, by ſtorm,
This poor terreſtrial citadel of man.
Amazing period! when each mountain-height
Out-burns Veſuvius; rocks eternal pour
Their melted maſs, as rivers once they pour'd;
Stars ruſh; and final ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughſhare o'er creation!——while aloft,
More than aſtoniſhment! if more can be!
Far other firmament than e'er was ſeen,
Than e'er was thought by man! far other ſtars!
Stars animate, that govern theſe of fire;
Far other ſun!——a ſun, O how unlike
The babe at Bethle'm! how unlike the man
That groan'd on Calvary!——yet he it is;
That man of ſorrows! O how chang'd! what pomp!

In grandeur terrible, all heav'n descends!
And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.
A swift archangel, with his golden wing,
As blots and clouds, that darken and disgrace
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.
And now, all dross remov'd, heav'n's own pure day,
Full on the confines of our aether, flames.
While, (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!
Hell bursting, belches forth her blazing seas,
And storms sulphureous; her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.
Lorenzo! welcome to this scene; the last
In nature's course; the first in wisdom's thought.
This strikes, if aught can strike thee; this awakes
The most supine; this snatches man from death.
Rouse, rouse, LORENZO! then, and follow me,
Where truth, the most momentous man can hear,
Loud calls my soul, and ardor wings her flight.
I find my inspiration in my theme;
The grandeur of my subject is my muse.
At midnight, when mankind is wrapt in peace,
And worldly fancy feeds on golden dreams;
To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour,
At midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp will burst
From tenfold darkness; sudden as the spark
From smitten steel; from nitr'ous grain, the blaze.
Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more!
The day is broke, which never more shall close!
Above, around, beneath, amazement all!
Terror and glory join'd in their extremes!
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire!
All nature struggling in the pangs of death!

Doſt thou not hear her? doſt thou not deplore
Her ſtrong convulſions, and her final groan?
Where are we now? ah me! the ground is gone
On which we ſtood, Lorenzo! while thou may'ſt,
Provide more firm ſupport, or ſink for ever!
Where? how? from whence? vain hope! it is too late!
Where, where, for ſhelter, ſhall the guilty fly,
When conſternation turns the good man pale?
Great day! for which all other days were made;
For which earth roſe from chaos, man from earth;
And an eternity, the date of gods,
Deſcended on poor earth-created man!
Great day of dread, deciſion, and deſpair!
At thought of thee, each ſublunary wiſh
Lets go its eager graſp, and drops the world;
And catches at each reed of hope in heav'n.
At thought of thee!——and art thou abſent then?
Lorenzo! no; 'tis here;——it is begun;——
Already is begun the grand aſſize,
In thee, in all: Deputed conſcience ſcales
The dread tribunal, and foreſtalls our doom;
Foreſtalls; and, by foreſtalling, proves it ſure.
Why on himſelf ſhould man void judgment paſs?
Is idle nature laughing at her ſons?
Who conſcience ſent, her ſentence will ſupport,
And GOD above aſſert that God in man.
Thrice happy they! that enter now the court
Heav'n opens in their boſoms: But, how rare,
Ah me! that magnanimity, how rare,
What hero, like the man who ſtands himſelf?
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone?
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings,

Reſolv'd to ſilence future murmurs there?
The coward flies; and, flying, is undone.
(Art thou a coward? No:) The coward flies;
Thinks, but thinks ſlightly; aſks, but fears to know;
Aſks, 'What is truth?' with Pilate; and retires;
Diſſolves the court, and mingles with the throng;
Aſylum ſad! from reaſon, hope, and heav'n!
Shall all, but man, look out with ardent eye,
For that great day, which was ordain'd for man?
O day of conſummation! mark ſupreme
(If men are wiſe) of human thought! nor leaſt,
Or in the ſight of angels, or their KING!
Angels, whoſe radiant circles, height o'er height,
Order o'er order riſing, blaze o'er blaze,
As in a theatre, ſurround this ſcene,
Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.
Angels look out for thee; for thee, their LORD,
To vindicate his glory; and for thee,
Creation univerſal calls aloud,
To diſ-involve the moral world, and give
To nature's renovation brighter charms.
Shall man alone, whoſe fate, whoſe final fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?
I think of nothing elſe; I ſee! I feel it!
All nature, like an earthquake, trembling round!
All deities, like ſummer's ſwarms, on wing!
All baſking in the full meridian blaze!
I ſee the Judge enthron'd! the flaming guard!
The volume open'd! open'd every heart!
A ſun-beam pointing out each ſecret thought!
No patron! interceſſor none! now paſt
The ſweet, the clement, mediatorial hour!

For guilt no plea! to pain, no pauſe! no bound!
Inexorable, all! and all, extreme!
Nor man alone; the foe of God and man,
From his dark den, blaſpheming, drags his chain,
And rears his brazen front, with thunder ſcarr'd;
Receives his ſentence, and begins his hell.
All vengeance paſt, now, ſeems abundant grace:
Like meteors in a ſtormy ſky, how roll
His baleful eyes! he curſes whom he dreads;
And deems it the firſt moment of his fall.
'Tis preſent to my thought!—and yet where is it?
Angels can't tell me; angels cannot gueſs
The period; from created beings lock'd
In darkneſs. But the proceſs, and the place,
Are leſs obſcure; for theſe may man inquire.
Say, thou great cloſe of human hopes and fears!
Great key of hearts! great finiſher of fates!
Great end! and great beginning! ſay, where art thou?
Art thou in time, or in eternity?
Nor in eternity, nor time, I find thee.
Theſe, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,
(Monarchs of all-elaps'd, or unarriv'd!)
As in debate, how beſt their pow'rs ally'd
May ſwell the grandeur, or diſcharge the wrath,
Of HIM, whom both their monarchies obey.
Time, this vaſt fabrick for him built, (and doom'd
With him to fall) now burſting o'er his head;
His lamp, the ſun, extinguiſh'd; from beneath
The frown of hideous darkneſs, calls his ſons
From their long ſlumber; from earth's heaving womb,
To ſecond birth; contemporary throng!
Rous'd at one call, upſtarting from one bed,

Preſs'd in one croud, appall'd with one amaze,
He turns them o'er, eternity! to thee.
Then (as a king depos'd diſdains to live)
He falls on his own ſcythe; nor falls alone;
His greateſt foe falls with him; time, and he
Who murder'd all time's offspring, death, expire.
TIME was! ETERNITY now reigns alone!
Awful eternity! offended queen!
And her reſentment to mankind, how juſt!
With kind intent, ſoliciting acceſs,
How often has ſhe knock'd at human hearts!
Rich to repay their hoſpitality,
How often call'd! and with the voice of God!
Yet bore repulſe, excluded as a cheat!
A dream! while fouleſt foes found welcome there!
A dream, a cheat, now, all things, but her ſmile.
For, lo! her twice ten thouſand gates thrown wide,
As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,
With banners, ſtreaming as the comet's blaze,
And clarions, louder than the deep in ſtorms,
Sonorous as immortal breath can blow,
Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,
Of light, of darkneſs; in a middle field,
Wide, as creation! populous, as wide!
A neutral region! there to mark th' event
Of that great drama, whoſe preceding ſcenes
Detain'd them cloſe ſpectators, thro' a length
Of ages, rip'ning to this grand reſult;
Ages, as yet unnumber'd, but by God;
Who now, pronouncing ſentence, vindicates
The rights of virtue, and his own renown.

For guilt no plea! to pain, no pauſe! no bound!
Inexorable, all! and all, extreme!
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From his dark den, blaſpheming, drags his chain,
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A dream, a cheat, now, all things, but her ſmile.
For, lo! her twice ten thouſand gates thrown wide,
As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,
With banners, ſtreaming as the comet's blaze,
And clarions, louder than the deep in ſtorms,
Sonorous as immortal breath can blow,
Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,
Of light, of darkneſs; in a middle field,
Wide, as creation! populous, as wide!
A neutral region! there to mark th' event
Of that great drama, whoſe preceding ſcenes
Detain'd them cloſe ſpectators, thro' a length
Of ages, rip'ning to this grand reſult;
Ages, as yet unnumber'd, but by God;
Who now, pronouncing ſentence, vindicates
The rights of virtue, and his own renown.

ETERNITY, the various ſentence paſs'd,
Aſſigns the ſever'd throng diſtinct abodes,
Sulphureous, or ambroſial: What enſues?
The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
Which makes a hell of hell, a heav'n of heav'n.
The goddeſs, with determin'd aſpect, turns
Her adamantine key's enormous ſize
Thro' deſtiny's inextricable wards,
Deep-driving ev'ry bolt, on both their fates.
Then, from the cryſtal battlements of heav'n,
Down, down ſhe hurls it thro' the dark profound,
Ten thouſand thouſand fathom; there to ruſt,
And ne'er unlock her reſolution more.
The deep reſounds, and hell, thro' all her glooms,
Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar.
O how unlike the chorus of the ſkies!
O how unlike thoſe ſhouts of joy, that ſhake
The whole aetherial! how the concave rings!
Nor ſtrange! when deities their voice exalt;
And louder far, than when creation roſe,
To ſee creation's godlike aim, and end,
So well accompliſh'd! ſo divinely clos'd!
To ſee the mighty dramatiſt's laſt act
(As meet) in glory riſing o'er the reſt.
No fancy'd God, a GOD indeed, deſcends
To ſolve all knots; to ſtrike the moral home;
To throw full day on darkeſt ſcenes of time;
To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.
Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praiſe,
The charm'd ſpectators thunder their applauſe;
And the vaſt void beyond, applauſe reſounds.

WHAT THEN AM I?——
Amidſt applauding worlds,
And worlds celeſtial, is their found on earth,
A peeviſh, diſſonant, rebellious ſtring,
Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?
Cenſure on thee, Lorenzo! I ſuſpend,
And turn it on myſelf; how greatly due!
All, all is right, by God ordain'd or done;
And who, but God, reſum'd the friends he gave?
And have I been complaining, then, ſo long?
Complaining of his favours; pain, and death?
Who, without pain's advice, would e'er be good?
Who, without death, but would be good in vain?
Pain is to ſave from pain; all puniſhment,
To make for peace; and death to ſave from death;
And ſecond death, to guard immortal life;
To rouſe the careleſs, the preſumptuous awe,
And turn the tide of ſouls another way;
By the ſame tenderneſs divine ordain'd,
That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man,
A fairer Eden, endleſs, in the ſkies.
Heav'n gives us friends to bleſs the preſent ſcene;
Reſumes them, to prepare us for the next.
All evils natural, are moral goods;
All diſcipline, indulgence, on the whole.
None are unhappy; all have cauſe to ſmile,
But ſuch as to themſelves that cauſe deny.
Our faults are at the bottom of our pains;
Error, in act, or judgment, is the ſource
Of endleſs ſighs: We ſin, or we miſtake,
And nature tax, when falſe opinion ſtings.
Let impious grief be baniſh'd, joy indulg'd;

But chiefly then, when grief puts in her claim.
Joy from the joyous, frequently betrays,
Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe.
Joy, amidst ills, corroborates, exalts;
'Tis joy and conquest; joy, and virtue too.
A noble fortitude in ills delights
Heav'n, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace.
Affliction is the good man's shining scene;
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray;
As night to stars, woe lustre gives to man.
Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
And virtue in calamities, admire.
The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;
An evergreen, that stands the northern blast,
And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.
'Tis a prime part of happiness, to know
How much unhappiness must prove our lot;
A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax,
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
Nor think it misery to be a man;
Who thinks it is, shall never be a god.
Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.
What spoke proud passion?—'*Wish my being lost!'
Presumptuous! blasphemous! absurd! and false!
The triumph of my soul is,—that I am;
And therefore that I may be—what? Lorenzo!
Look inward, and look deep; and deeper still;
Unfathomably deep our treasure runs
In golden veins, through all eternity!

* Referring to the first Night.

Ages, and ages, and ſucceeding ſtill
New ages, where this phantom of an hour,
Which courts, each night, dull ſlumber, for repair,
Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praiſe,
And fly through infinite, and all unlock;
And (if deſerv'd) by heav'n's redundant love,
Made half-adorable itſelf, adore;
And find, in adoration, endleſs joy!
Where thou, not maſter of a moment here,
Frail as the flow'r, and fleeting as the gale,
May'ſt boaſt a whole eternity, enrich'd
With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.
Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninſpir'd,
Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever ſhall,
How kind is GOD, how great (if good) is man.
No man too largely from heav'n's love can hope,
If what is hop'd he labours to ſecure.
Ills?—there are none: All-gracious! none from thee;
From man full many! num'rous is the race
Of blackeſt ills, and thoſe immortal too,
Begot by madneſs on fair liberty;
Heav'n's daughter, hell-debauch'd! her hand alone
Unlocks deſtruction to the ſons of men,
Faſt barr'd by thine; high-wall'd with adamant,
Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,
And cover'd with the thunders of thy law;
Whoſe threats are mercies, whoſe injunctions, guides,
Aſſiſting, not reſtraining, reaſon's choice:
Whoſe ſanctions, unavoidable reſults
From nature's courſe, indulgently reveal'd;
If unreveal'd, more dang'rous, nor leſs ſure.

Thus, an indulgent father warns his ſons,
'Do this; fly that,'—nor always tells the cauſe;
Pleas'd to reward, as duty to his will,
A conduct needful to their own repoſe.
Great God of wonders! (if, thy love ſurvey'd,
Aught elſe the name of wonderful retains)
What rocks are theſe, on which to build our truſt?
Thy ways admit no blemiſh; none I find;
Or this alone—'That none is to be found.'
Not one, to ſoften cenſure's hardy crime;
Not one, to palliate peeviſh grief's complaint,
Who, like a daemon, murm'ring from the duſt,
Dares into judgment call her judge—ſupreme!
For all I bleſs thee; moſt, for the ſevere;
* Her death—my own at hand—the fiery gulph,
That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!
It thunders;—but it thunders to preſerve;
It ſtrengthens what it ſtrikes; its wholeſome dread
Averts the dreaded pain; its hideous groans
Join heav'n's ſweet hallelujahs in thy praiſe,
Great ſource of good alone! how kind in all!
In vengeance, kind! pain, death, Gehenna, SAVE.
Thus, in thy world material, mighty Mind!
Not that alone which ſolaces, and ſhines,
The rough and gloomy, challenges our praiſe.
The winter is as needful as the ſpring;
The thunder, as the ſun; a ſtagnate maſs
Of vapours breeds a peſtilential air;
Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze
To nature's health, than purifying ſtorms;

* Lucia.

The dread volcano miniſters to good.
Its ſmother'd flames might undermine the world.
Loud Ætnas fulminate in love to man;
Comets good omens are, when duly ſcann'd;
And, in their uſe, eclipſes learn to ſhine.
Man is reſponſible for ills receiv'd;
Thoſe we call wretched are a choſen band,
Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace.
Amid my liſt of bleſſings infinite,
Stands this the foremoſt, 'That my heart has bled.'
'Tis heav'n's laſt effort of good-will to man;
When pain can't bleſs, heav'n quits us in deſpair.
Who fails to grieve, when juſt occaſion calls,
Or grieves too much, deſerves not to be bleſs'd;
Inhuman, or effeminate, his heart;
Reaſon abſolves the grief, which reaſon ends.
May heav'n ne'er truſt my friend with happineſs,
Till it has taught him how to bear it well,
By previous pain; and made it ſafe to ſmile!
Such ſmiles are mine, and ſuch may they remain;
Nor hazard their extinction, from exceſs.
My change of heart a change of ſtyle demands;
The Conſolation cancels the Complaint,
And makes a convert of my guilty ſong.

As when o'er-labour'd, and inclin'd to breathe,
A panting traveller, ſome riſing ground,
Some ſmall aſcent, has gain'd, he turns him round,
And meaſures with his eye the various vale,
The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has paſs'd;
And, ſatiate of his journey, thinks of home,
Endear'd by diſtance, nor affects more toil;
Thus I, though ſmall, indeed, is that aſcent

The muſe has gain'd, review the paths ſhe trod;
Various, extenſive, beaten but by few;
And, conſcious of her prudence in repoſe,
Pauſe; and with pleaſure meditate an end,
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An azure zone, thy waiſt; clouds, in heav'n's loom
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In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form; and, heav'n throughout,
Voluminouſly pow'r thy pompous train.
Thy gloomy grandeurs (nature's moſt auguſt,
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On which to dwell; to ſtretch to that expanſe
Of thought, to riſe to that exalted height
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Main, without tempeſt, pirate, rock, or ſhore;
And whence thou may'ſt import eternal wealth;
And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.
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Above our atmoſphere's inteſtine wars,
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail;
Above the northern neſts of feather'd ſnows,
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the caves
Where infant tempeſts wait their growing wings,
And tune their tender voices to that roar,
Which ſoon, perhaps, ſhall ſhake a guilty world;
Above miſconſtru'd omens of the ſky,
Far-travell'd comet's calculated blaze,
Elance thy thought, and think of more than man.
Thy ſoul, till now, contracted, wither'd, ſhrunk,
Blighted by blaſts of earth's unwholeſome air,
Will bloſſom here; ſpread all her faculties
To theſe bright ardors; ev'ry pow'r unfold,
And riſe into ſublimities of thought;
Stars teach, as well as ſhine. At nature's birth,
Thus, their commiſſion ran——'Be kind to man.'
Where art thou, poor benighted traveller!
The ſtars will light thee, tho' the moon ſhould fail.
Where art thou, more benighted! more aſtray!
In ways immortal? the ſtars call thee back;
And, if obey'd their counſel, ſet thee right.

* Night the Eighth.

This prospect vast, what is it?—weigh'd aright,
'Tis nature's system of divinity,
And ev'ry student of the night inspires.
'Tis elder scripture, writ by GOD's own hand;
Scripture authentic! uncorrupt by man.
Lorenzo! with my radius (the rich gift
Of thought nocturnal!) I'll point out to thee
Its various lessons; some that may surprise
An un-adept in mysteries of Night;
Little, perhaps, expected in her school,
Nor thought to grow on planet, or on star.
Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign;
Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here
Exists indeed;——a lecture to mankind.
What read we here?——th' existence of a GOD?—
Yes; and of other beings, man above;
Natives of aether! sons of higher climes!
And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more,
Eternity is written in the skies.
And whose eternity?—Lorenzo! thine;
Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,
Virtue grows here; here springs the sov'reign cure
Of almost ev'ry vice; but chiefly thine;
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.
Lorenzo! thou can'st wake at midnight too,
Though not on morals bent: Ambition, pleasure!
Those tyrants I for thee so † lately fought,
Afford their harrass'd slaves but slender rest.
Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,
And the sun's noon-tide blaze, prime dawn of day;

† Night the Eighth.

Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,
Commencing one of our Antipodes!
In thy nocturnal rove, one moment halt,
'Twixt ſtage and ſtage, of riot, and cabal;
And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift,
If bold to meet the face of injur'd heav'n)
To yonder ſtars: For other ends they ſhine,
Than to light revellers from ſhame to ſhame,
And, thus, be made accomplices in guilt.
Why from yon arch, that infinite of ſpace,
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,
Which ſet the living firmament on fire,
At the firſt glance, in ſuch an overwhelm
Of wonderful, on man's aſtoniſh'd ſight,
Ruſhes Omnipotence?—to curb our pride;
Our reaſon rouſe, and lead it to that pow'r,
Whoſe love lets down theſe ſilver chains of light;
To draw up man's ambition to himſelf,
And bind our chaſte affections to his throne.
Thus the three virtues, leaſt alive on earth,
And welcom'd on heav'n's coaſt with moſt applauſe,
An humble, pure, and heav'nly-minded heart,
Are here inſpir'd:——And canſt thou gaze too long?
Nor ſtands thy wrath depriv'd of its reproof,
Or un-upbraided by this radiant choir.
The planets of each ſyſtem repreſent
Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails.
Sweet interchange of rays, receiv'd, return'd;
Enlight'ning, and enlighten'd! all, at once,
Attracting, and attracted! patriot-like,
None ſins againſt the welfare of the whole;
But their reciprocal, unſelfiſh aid,

Affords an emblem of millennial love.
Nothing in nature, much leſs conſcious being,
Was e'er created ſolely for itſelf:
Thus man his ſov'reign duty learns in this
Material picture of benevolence.
And know, of all our ſupercilious race,
Thou moſt inflammable! thou waſp of men!
Man's angry heart, inſpected, would be found
As rightly ſet, as are the ſtarry ſpheres;
'Tis nature's ſtructure, broke by ſtubborn will,
Breeds all that un-celeſtial diſcord there.
Wilt thou not feel the bias nature gave?
Canſt thou deſcend from converſe with the ſkies,
And ſeize thy brother's throat?—for what—a clod,
An inch of earth? the planets cry, "Forbear,"
They chace our double darkneſs; nature's gloom,
And (kinder ſtill!) our intellectual night.
And ſee, day's amiable ſiſter ſends
Her invitation, in the ſofteſt rays
Of mitigated luſtre; courts thy ſight,
Which ſuffers from her tyrant-brother's blaze.
Night grants thee the full freedom of the ſkies,
Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye;
With gain, and joy, ſhe bribes thee to be wiſe.
Night opes the nobleſt ſcenes, and ſheds an awe,
Which gives thoſe venerable ſcenes full weight,
And deep reception, in th' intender'd heart;
While light peeps thro' the darkneſs, like a ſpy:
And darkneſs ſhews its grandeur by the light.
Nor is the profit greater than the joy,
If human hearts at glorious objects glow,
And admiration can inſpire delight.

What ſpeak I more, than I, this moment, feel?
With pleaſing ſtupor firſt the ſoul is ſtruck,
(Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wiſe!)
Then into tranſport ſtarting from her trance,
With love, and admiration, how ſhe glows!
This gorgeous apparatus! this diſplay!
This oſtentation of creative power!
This theatre!——what eye can take it in?
By what divine inchantment was it rais'd,
For minds of the firſt magnitude to launch
In endleſs ſpeculation, and adore?
One ſun by day, by night ten thouſand ſhine;
And light us deep into the DEITY;
How boundleſs in magnificence and might!
O what a confluence of aethereal fires,
From urns un-number'd, down the ſteep of heav'n,
Streams to a point, and centres in my ſight!
Nor tarries there; I feel it at my heart.
My heart, at once, it humbles, and exalts;
Lays it in duſt, and calls it to the ſkies.
Who ſees it unexalted? or unaw'd?
Who ſees it, and can ſtop at what is ſeen?
Material offſpring of Omnipotence!
Inanimate, all-animating birth!
Work worthy him who made it! worthy praiſe!
All praiſe! praiſe more than human! nor deny'd
Thy praiſe divine!—But tho' man, drown'd in ſleep,
With-holds his homage, not alone I wake;
Bright legions ſwarm unſeen, and ſing, unheard
By mortal ear, the glorious architect,
In this his univerſal temple hung
With luſtres, with innumerable lights,

That ſhed religion on the ſoul; at once,
The temple, and the preacher! O how loud
It calls devotion! genuine growth of night!
Devotion! daughter of aſtronomy!
An undevout aſtronomer is mad.
True; all thinks ſpeak a GOD; but in the ſmall,
Men trace out him; in great, he ſeizes man;
Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills
With new inquiries, 'mid aſſociates new.
Tell me, ye ſtars! ye planets! tell me, all
Ye ſtarr'd, and planeted, inhabitants! what is it?
What are theſe ſons of wonder? Say, proud arch!
(Within whoſe azure palaces they dwell)
Built with divine ambition! in diſdain
Of limit built! built in the taſte of heaven!
Vaſt concave! ample dome! waſt thou deſign'd
A meet apartment for the DEITY?——
Not ſo; that thought alone thy ſtate impairs,
Thy lofty ſinks, and ſhallows thy profound,
And ſtreightens thy diffuſive; dwarfs the whole,
And makes an univerſe an orrery.
But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,
Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is reſtor'd,
O nature! wide flies off th' expanding round.
As when whole magazines, at once, are fir'd,
The ſmitten air is hollow'd by the blow;
The vaſt diſploſion diſſipates the clouds;
Shock'd aether's billows daſh the diſtant ſkies;
Thus (but far more) th' expanding round flies off,
And leaves a mighty void, a ſpacious womb,
Might teem with new creation; re-inflam'd
Thy luminaries triumph, and aſſume

Divinity themſelves. Nor was it ſtrange,
Matter high-wrought to ſuch ſurpriſing pomp,
Such godlike glory, ſtole the ſtyle of gods,
From ages dark, obtuſe, and ſteep'd in ſenſe;
For, ſure, to ſenſe, they truly are divine,
And half-abſolv'd idolatry from guilt;
Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was
In thoſe, who put forth all they had of man
Unloſt, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher;
But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd; and thought
What was their higheſt, muſt be their ador'd.

But they how weak, who could no higher mount!
And are there, then, Lorenzo! thoſe, to whom
Unſeen, and unexiſtent, are the ſame?
And if incomprehenſible is join'd,
Who dare pronounce it madneſs, to believe?
Why has the mighty BUILDER thrown aſide
All meaſure in his work; ſtretch'd out his line
So far, and ſpread amazement o'er the whole?
Then (as he took delight in wide extremes)
Deep in the boſom of his univerſe,
Dropt down that reas'ning mite, that inſect, man,
To crawl and gaze, and wonder at the ſcene?——
That man might ne'er preſume to plead amazement
For diſbelief of wonders in himſelf.
Shall God be leſs miraculous, than what
His hand has form'd? ſhall myſteries deſcend
From unmyſterious? things more elevate,
Be more familiar? uncreated lie
More obvious than created, to the graſp
Of human thought? the more of wonderful
Is heard in him, the more we ſhould aſſent.

Could we conceive him, GOD he could not be;
Or he not God, or we could not be men.
A GOD alone can comprehend a GOD;
Man's diſtance how immenſe! on ſuch a theme,
Know this, Lorenzo! (ſeem it ne'er ſo ſtrange)
Nothing can ſatisfy, but what confounds;
Nothing, but what aſtoniſhes, is true.
The ſcene thou ſeeſt, atteſts the truth I ſing,
And ev'ry ſtar ſheds light upon thy creed.
Theſe ſtars, this furniture, this coſt of heav'n,
If but reported, thou hadſt ne'er believ'd;
But thine eye tells thee, the romance is true.
The grand of nature is th' Almighty's oath,
In reaſon's court, to ſilence unbelief.
How my mind, op'ning at this ſcene, imbibes
The moral emanations of the ſkies,
While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo leſs admires!
Has the great ſov'reign ſent ten thouſand worlds
To tell us, he reſides above them all,
In glory's unapproachable receſs?
And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny
The ſumptuous, the magnific embaſſy
A moment's audience? turn we, nor will hear
From whom they come, or what they would impart
For man's emolument; ſole cauſe that ſtoops
Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo! rouſe;
Let thought, awaken'd, take the light'ning's wing,
And glance from eaſt to weſt, from pole to pole.
Who ſees, but is confounded, or convinc'd?
Renounces reaſon, or a GOD adores?
Mankind was ſent into the world to ſee:
Sight gives the ſcience needful to their peace:

That obvious ſcience aſks ſmall learning's aid.
Wouldſt thou on metaphyſic pinions ſoar?
Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns?
Or travel hiſtory's enormous round?
Nature no ſuch hard taſk enjoins: She gave
A make to man directive of his thought;
A make ſet upright, pointing to the ſtars,
As who ſhould ſay, 'read thy chief leſſon there.'
Too late to read this manuſcript of heaven,
When, like a parchment-ſcroll, ſhrunk up by flames,
It folds Lorenzo's leſſon from his ſight.
Leſſon how various! not the GOD alone,
I ſee his miniſters; I ſee, diffus'd
In radiant orders, eſſences ſublime,
Of various offices, of various plume,
In heav'nly liveries, diſtinctly clad,
Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
Or all commix'd; they ſtand, with wings outſpread,
Liſt'ning to catch the maſter's leaſt command,
And fly thro' nature, ere the moment ends;
Numbers innumerable! well conceiv'd
By Pagan, and by Chriſtian! o'er each ſphere
Preſides an angel, to direct its courſe,
And feed, or fan, its flames; or to diſcharge
Other high truſts unknown. For who can ſee
Such pomp of matter, and imagine, mind,
For which alone inanimate was made,
More ſparingly diſpens'd? that nobler ſon,
Far liker the great SIRE;—'tis thus the ſkies
Inform us of ſuperiors numberleſs,
As much, in excellence, above mankind,
As above earth, in magnitude, the ſpheres.

Theſe, as a cloud of witneſſes, hang o'er us;
In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds;
Perhaps, a thouſand demi-gods deſcend
On ev'ry beam we ſee, to walk with men.
Awful reflection! ſtrong reſtraint from ill!

Yet, here, our virtue finds ſtill ſtronger aid
From theſe aetherial glories ſenſe ſurveys.
Something, like magic, ſtrikes from this blue vault;
With juſt attention is it view'd? we feel
A ſudden ſuccour, unimplor'd, unthought;
Nature herſelf does half the work of man.
Seas, rivers, mountains, foreſts, deſerts, rocks,
The promontory's height, the depth profound
Of ſubterranean, excavated grots,
Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide
From nature's ſtructure, or the ſcoop of time;
If ample of dimenſion, vaſt of ſize,
Ev'n theſe an aggrandizing impulſe give;
Of ſolemn thought, enthuſiaſtic heights
Ev'n theſe infuſe.——But what of vaſt in theſe?
Nothing;——or we muſt own the ſkies forgot.
Much leſs in art,—vain art! thou pigmy power!
How doſt thou ſwell, and ſtrut, with human pride,
To ſhew thy littleneſs! what childiſh toys,
Thy wat'ry columns ſquirted to the clouds!
Thy baſon'd rivers, and impriſon'd ſeas!
Thy mountains moulded into forms of men!
Thy hundred-gated capitals! or thoſe
Where three days travel left us much to ride;
Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
Arches triumphal, theatres immenſe,
Or nodding gardens pendent in mid air!

Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way!
Yet theſe affect us in no common kind.
What then the force of ſuch ſuperior ſcenes?
Enter a temple, it will ſtrike an awe:
What awe from this the DEITY has built?
A good man ſeen, though ſilent, counſel gives:
The touch'd ſpectator wiſhes to be wiſe:
In a bright mirror his own hands have made,
Here we ſee ſomething like the face of God.
Seems it not then enough, to ſay, Lorenzo!
To man abandon'd, 'haſt thou ſeen the ſkies?"

And yet, ſo thwarted nature's kind deſign
By daring man, he makes her ſacred awe
(That guard from ill) his ſhelter, his temptation
To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
Celeſtial art's intent. The trembling ſtars
See crimes gigantic, ſtalking thro' the gloom
With front erect, that hide their head by day,
And making night ſtill darker by their deeds.
Slumb'ring in covert, till the ſhades deſcend,
Rapine, and murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.
The miſer earths his treaſure; and the thief,
Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn.
Now plots, and foul conſpiracies, awake;
And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
Havock and devaſtation they prepare,
And kingdoms tott'ring in the field of blood.
Now ſons of riot in mid-revel rage.
What ſhall I do?—ſuppreſs it? or proclaim?—]
Why ſleeps the thunder? now, Lorenzo! now,
His beſt friend's couch, the rank adulterer
Aſcends ſecure, and laughs at gods and men.

Prepoſt'rous madmen, void of fear or ſhame,
Lay their crimes bare to theſe chaſte eyes of heav'n;
Yet ſhrink, and ſhudder, at a mortal's ſight.
Were moon, and ſtars, for villains only made?
To guide, yet ſcreen them, with tenebrious light?
No; they were made to faſhion the ſublime
Of human hearts, and wiſer make the wiſe.
Thoſe ends were anſwer'd once; when mortals liv'd
Of ſtronger wing, of aquiline aſcent
In theory ſublime. O how unlike
Thoſe vermin of the night, this moment ſung,
Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!
Thoſe antient ſages, human ſtars! they met
Their brothers of the ſkies, at mid-night hour;
Their counſel aſk'd; and, what they aſk'd, obey'd.
The Stagyrite, and Plato, he who drank
The poiſon'd bowl, and he of Tuſculum,
With him of Corduba, (immortal names!)
In theſe unbounded, and Elyſian, walks,
An area fit for gods, and godlike men,
They took their nightly round, thro' radiant paths
By ſeraphs trod; inſtructed, chiefly, thus,
To tread in their bright footſteps here below;
To walk in worth ſtill brighter than the ſkies.
There, they contracted their contempt of earth;
Of hopes eternal kindled, there, the fire;
There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew
(Great viſitants!) more intimate with GOD,
More worth to men, more joyous to themſelves.
Thro' various virtues, they, with ardour, ran
The Zodiac of their learn'd, illuſtrious lives.

In Chriſtian hearts, O for a pagan zeal!
A needful, but opprobrious pray'r! as much
Our ardor leſs, as greater is our light.
How monſtrous this in morals! ſcarce more ſtrange
Would this phaenomenon in nature ſtrike,
A ſun, that froze us, or a ſtar, that warm'd.
What taught theſe heroes of the moral world?
To theſe thou giv'ſt thy praiſe, give credit too.
Theſe doctors ne'er were penſion'd to deceive thee;
And pagan tutors are thy taſte.—They taught,
That, narrow views betray to miſery:
That, wiſe it is to comprehend the whole:
That, virtue roſe from nature, ponder'd well,
The ſingle baſe of virtue built to heav'n:
That, GOD, and nature, our attention claim:
That, nature is the glaſs reflecting GOD,
As, by the ſea, reflected is the ſun,
Too glorious to be gaz'd on in his ſphere:
That, mind immortal, loves immortal aims:
That, boundleſs mind affects a boundleſs ſpace:
That, vaſt ſurveys, and the ſublime of things,
The ſoul aſſimilate, and make her great:
That, therefore, heav'n her glories, as a fund
Of inſpiration, thus ſpreads out to man.
Such are their doctrines; ſuch the night inſpir'd.
And what more true? what truth of greater weight?
The ſoul of man was made to walk the ſkies;
Delightful outlet of her priſon here!
There, diſincumber'd from her chains, the ties
Of toys terreſtrial, ſhe can rove at large;
There, freely can reſpire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion let looſe all her pow'rs;

And, undeluded, graſp at ſomething great.
Nor, as a ſtranger, does ſhe wander there;
But, wonderful herſelf, thro' wonder ſtrays;
Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own;
Dives deep in their oeconomy divine,
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
And, like a maſter, judges not amiſs.
Hence greatly pleas'd, and juſtly proud, the ſoul
Grows conſcious of her birth celeſtial; breathes
More life, more vigour, in her native air;
And feels herſelf at home among the ſtars;
And, feeling, emulates her country's praiſe.

What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo?—
As earth the body, ſince the ſkies ſuſtain
The ſoul with food, that gives immortal life,
Call it, the noble paſture of the mind;
Which there expatiates, ſtrengthens, and exults,
And riots thro' the luxuries of thought.
Call it, the Garden of the DEITY,
Bloſſom'd with ſtars, redundant in the growth
Of fruit ambroſial; moral fruit to man.
Call it, the Breaſt-plate of the true High-prieſt,
Ardent with gems oracular, that give,
In points of higheſt moment, right reſponſe;
And ill-neglected, if we prize our peace.

Thus have we found a true aſtrology;
Thus, have we found a new, a noble ſenſe,
In which alone ſtars govern human fates.
O that the ſtars (as ſome have feign'd) let fall
Bloodſhed, and havock, on embattl'd realms,
And reſcu'd monarchs from ſo black a guilt!
BOURBON! this wiſh how gen'rous in a foe!

Wouldſt thou be great, wouldſt thou become a god,
And ſtick thy deathleſs name among the ſtars,
For mighty conqueſts on a needle's point?
Inſtead of forging chains for foreigners,
Baſtile thy tutor: Grandeur all thy aim?
As yet thou know'ſt not what it is: How great,
How glorious, then, appears the mind of man,
When in it all the ſtars, and planets, roll!
And what it ſeems, it is: Great objects make
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;
Thoſe ſtill more godlike, as theſe more divine.
And more divine than theſe, thou canſt not ſee.
Dazl'd, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught
Of miſcellaneous ſplendors, how I reel
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!
An Eden, this! a Paradiſe unloſt!
I meet the DEITY in ev'ry view,
And tremble at my nakedneſs before him!
O that I could but reach the tree of life!
For here it grows, unguarded from our taſte;
No flaming-ſword denies our entrance here;
Would man but gather, he might live for ever.
Lorenzo! much of moral haſt thou ſeen.
Of curious arts art thou more fond? then mark
The mathematic glories of the ſkies,
In number, weight, and meaſure, all ordain'd.
Lorenzo's boaſted builders, chance, and fate,
Are left to finiſh his aerial tow'rs;
Wiſdom, and choice, their well-known characters
Here deep impreſs; and claim it for their own.
Though ſplendid all, no ſplendor void of uſe;
Uſe rivals beauty: Art contends with pow'r;

And, undeluded, graſp at ſomething great.
Nor, as a ſtranger, does ſhe wander there;
But, wonderful herſelf, thro' wonder ſtrays;
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Thus, have we found a new, a noble ſenſe,
In which alone ſtars govern human fates.
O that the ſtars (as ſome have feign'd) let fall
Bloodſhed, and havock, on embattl'd realms,
And reſcu'd monarchs from ſo black a guilt!
BOURBON! this wiſh how gen'rous in a foe!

Wouldſt thou be great, wouldſt thou become a god,
And ſtick thy deathleſs name among the ſtars,
For mighty conqueſts on a needle's point?
Inſtead of forging chains for foreigners,
Baſtile thy tutor: Grandeur all thy aim?
As yet thou know'ſt not what it is: How great,
How glorious, then, appears the mind of man,
When in it all the ſtars, and planets, roll!
And what it ſeems, it is: Great objects make
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;
Thoſe ſtill more godlike, as theſe more divine.
And more divine than theſe, thou canſt not ſee.
Dazl'd, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught
Of miſcellaneous ſplendors, how I reel
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!
An Eden, this! a Paradiſe unloſt!
I meet the DEITY in ev'ry view,
And tremble at my nakedneſs before him!
O that I could but reach the tree of life!
For here it grows, unguarded from our taſte;
No flaming-ſword denies our entrance here;
Would man but gather, he might live for ever.
Lorenzo! much of moral haſt thou ſeen.
Of curious arts art thou more fond? then mark
The mathematic glories of the ſkies,
In number, weight, and meaſure, all ordain'd.
Lorenzo's boaſted builders, chance, and fate,
Are left to finiſh his aerial tow'rs;
Wiſdom, and choice, their well-known characters
Here deep impreſs; and claim it for their own.
Though ſplendid all, no ſplendor void of uſe;
Uſe rivals beauty: Art contends with pow'r;

No wanton waſte, amid effuſe expence;
The great Oeconomiſt adjuſting all
To prudent pomp, magnificently wiſe.
How rich the proſpect! and for ever new!
And neweſt to the man that views it moſt;
For newer ſtill in infinite ſucceeds.
Then, theſe aerial racers, O how ſwift!
How the ſhaft loiters from the ſtrongeſt ſtring!
Spirit alone can diſtance the career.
Orb above orb aſcending without end!
Circle in circle, without end, inclos'd!
Wheel within wheel; Ezekiel! like to thine!
Like thine, it ſeems a viſion, or a dream;
Though ſeen, we labour to believe it true!
What involution! what extent! what ſwarms
Of worlds, that laugh at earth! immenſely great!
Immenſely diſtant from each other's ſpheres!
What, then, the wond'rous ſpace through which they
roll?
At once it quite ingulphs all human thought;
'Tis comprehenſion's abſolute defeat.
Nor think thou ſeeſt a wild diſorder here;
Through this illuſtrious chaos to the ſight,
Arrangement neat, and chaſteſt order, reign.
The path preſcrib'd, inviolably kept,
Upbraids the lawleſs ſallies of mankind.
Worlds, ever thwarting, never interfere;
What knots are ty'd! how ſoon are they diſſolv'd,
And ſet the ſeeming-marry'd planets free!
They rove for ever, without error rove;
Confuſion unconfus'd! nor leſs admire
This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!

In motion, all! yet what profound repoſe!
What fervid action, yet no noiſe! as aw'd
To ſilence, by the preſence of their LORD;
Or huſh'd, by his command, in love to man,
And bid let fall ſoft beams on human reſt,
Reſtleſs themſelves. On yon cœrulean plain,
In exultation to their GOD, and thine,
They dance, they ſing eternal jubilee,
Eternal celebration of his praiſe.
But, ſince their ſong arrives not at our ear,
Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the ſight
Fair hieroglyphic of his peerleſs power.
Mark, how the labyrinthian turns they take,
The circles intricate, and myſtic maze,
Weave the grand cypher of Omnipotence;
To gods, how great! how legible to man!
Leaves ſo much wonder greater wonder ſtill?
Where are the pillars that ſupport the ſkies?
What more than Atlantean ſhoulder props
Th' incumbent load? what magic, what ſtrange art,
In fluid air theſe pond'rous orbs ſuſtains?
Who would not think them hung in golden chains?—
And ſo they are; in the high will of heav'n,
Which fixes all; makes adamant of air,
Or air of adamant; makes all of nought,
Or nought of all; if ſuch the dread decree.
Imagine from their deep foundations torn
The moſt gigantic ſons of earth, the broad
And tow'ring Alps, all toſs'd into the ſea;
And, light as down, or volatile as air,
Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
In time, and meaſure, exquiſite; while all

The winds, in emulation of the ſpheres,
Tune their ſonorous inſtruments aloft;
The concert ſwell, and animate the ball.
Would this appear amazing? What, then, worlds,
In a far thinner element ſuſtain'd,
And acting the ſame part, with greater ſkill,
More rapid movement, and for nobleſt ends?
More obvious ends to paſs, are not theſe ſtars
The ſeats majeſtic, proud imperial thrones,
On which angelic delegates of heav'n,
At certain periods, as the Sov'reign nods,
Diſcharge high truſts of vengeance, or of love;
To clothe, in outward grandeur, grand deſign,
And acts moſt ſolemn ſtill more ſolemnize?
Ye citizens of air! what ardent thanks,
What full effuſion of the grateful heart,
Is due from man indulg'd in ſuch a ſight!
A ſight ſo noble! and a ſight ſo kind!
It drops new truths at ev'ry new ſurvey!
Feels not Lorenzo ſomething ſtir within,
That ſweeps away all periods? As theſe ſpheres
Meaſure duration, they no leſs inſpire
The godlike hope of ages without end.
The boundleſs ſpace, thro' which theſe rovers take
Their reſtleſs roam, ſuggeſts the ſiſter-thought
Of boundleſs time. Thus, by kind nature's ſkill,
To man unlabour'd, that important gueſt,
Eternity, finds entrance at the ſight:
And an eternity, for man ordain'd,
Or theſe his deſtin'd midnight counſellors,
The ſtars, had never whiſper'd it to man.
Nature informs, but ne'er inſults, her ſons.

Could ſhe then kindle the moſt ardent wiſh
To diſappoint it ?—that is blaſphemy.
Thus, of thy creed a ſecond article,
Momentous, as th' exiſtence of a GOD,
Is found (as I conceive) where rarely ſought;
And thou may'ſt read thy ſoul immortal, here.
Here, then, Lorenzo! on theſe glories dwell;
Nor want the gilt, illuminated, roof,
That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
Aſſemblées ?—this is one divinely bright;
Here, unendanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
Range thro' the faireſt, and the Sultan ſcorn.
He, wiſe as thou, no creſcent holds ſo fair,
As that, which on his turbant awes a world;
And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.
Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,
A mind ſuperior to the charms of power.
Thou muffled in deluſions of this life!
Can yonder moon turn ocean in his bed,
From ſide to ſide, in conſtant ebb, and flow,
And purify from ſtench his wat'ry realms?
And fails her moral influence? wants ſhe power
To turn Lorenzo's ſtubborn tide of thought
From ſtagnating on earth's infected ſhore,
And purge from nuiſance his corrupted heart?
Fails her attraction when it draws to heav'n?
Nay, and to what thou valu'ſt more, earth's joy?
Minds elevate, and panting for unſeen,
And defecate from ſenſe, alone obtain
Full reliſh of exiſtence undeflower'd,
The life of life, the zeſt of worldly bliſs.
All elſe on earth amounts——to what? to this;

'Bad to be ſuffer'd; bleſſings to be left:'
Earth's richeſt inventory boaſts no more.
Of higher ſcenes be, then, the call obey'd.
O let me gaze!—of gazing there's no end.
Oh let me think!—thought too is wilder'd here;
In mid-way flight imagination tires;
Yet ſoon re-prunes her wing to ſoar anew,
Her point unable to forbear, or gain;
So great the pleaſure, ſo profound the plan!
A banquet, this, where men, and angels, meet,
Eat the ſame manna, mingle earth and heav'n.
How diſtant ſome of theſe nocturnal ſuns!
So diſtant (ſays the ſage) 'twere not abſurd
To doubt, if beams, ſet out at nature's birth,
Are yet arriv'd at this ſo foreign world;
Tho' nothing half ſo rapid as their flight,
An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
And roll for ever: Who can ſatiate ſight
In ſuch a ſcene? in ſuch an ocean wide
Of deep aſtoniſhment? where depth, height, breadth,
Are loſt in their extremes; and where to count
The thick-ſown glories in this field of fire,
Perhaps a ſeraph's computation fails.
Now, go, ambition! boaſt thy boundleſs might
In conqueſt, o'er the tenth part of a grain.
And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles,
To give his tott'ring faith a ſolid baſe.
Why call for leſs than is already thine?
Thou art no novice in theology;
What is a miracle?—'tis a reproach,
'Tis an implicit ſatire, on mankind;
And while it ſatisfies, it cenſures too.

To common-ſenſe, great nature's courſe proclaims
A DEITY: When mankind falls aſleep,
A miracle is ſent, as an alarm,
To wake the world, and prove him o'er again,
By recent argument, but not more ſtrong.
Say, which imports more plenitude of pow'r,
Or nature's laws to fix, or to repeal?
To make a ſun, or ſtop his mid-career?
To countermand his orders, and ſend back
The flaming courier to the frighted eaſt,
Warm'd, and aſtoniſh'd, at his ev'ning ray?
Or bid the moon, as with her journey tir'd,
In Ajalon's ſoft, flow'ry vale repoſe?
Great things are theſe; ſtill greater, to create.
From Adam's bow'r look down thro' the whole train
Of miracles;—reſiſtleſs is their power?
They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,
Than this, call'd unmiraculous ſurvey,
If duly weigh'd, if rationally ſeen,
If ſeen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
Sees nought but ſpangles here; the fool, no more.
Say'ſt thou, 'The courſe of nature governs all?'
The courſe of nature is the art of GOD.
The miracles thou call'ſt for, this atteſt;
For ſay, could nature nature's courſe controll?

But, miracles apart, who ſees HIM not,
Nature's Controller, Author, Guide, and End!
Who turns his eye on nature's midnight-face,
But muſt inquire—'What hand behind the ſcene,
'What arm almighty, put theſe wheeling globes
'In motion, and wound up the vaſt machine?
'Who rounded in his palm theſe ſpacious orbs?

'Who bowl'd them flaming thro' the dark profound,
'Num'rous as glitt'ring gems of morning-dew,
'Or ſparks from pop'lous cities in a blaze,
'And ſet the boſom of old night on fire?
'Peopled her deſert, and made horror ſmile?'
Or, if the military ſtyle delights thee,
(For ſtars have fought their battles, leagu'd with man)
'Who marſhals this bright hoſt? inrolls their names?
'Appoints their poſts, their marches, and returns,
'Punctual, at ſtated periods? who diſbands
'Theſe vet'ran troops, their final duty done,
'If e'er diſbanded?'—HE, whoſe potent word,
Like the loud trumpet, levy'd firſt their pow'rs
Of Night's inglorious empire, where they ſlept
In beds of darkneſs; arm'd them with fierce flames,
Arrang'd, and diſciplin'd, and cloth'd in gold;
And call'd them out of Chaos to the field,
Where now they war with vice and unbelief.
O let us join this army! joining theſe,
Will give us hearts intrepid, at that hour,
When brighter flames ſhall cut a darker night;
When theſe ſtrong demonſtrations of a GOD
Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their ſpheres,
And one eternal curtain cover all!

Struck at that thought, as new-awak'd, I lift
A more enlighten'd eye, and read the ſtars
To man ſtill more propitious; and their aid
(Though guiltleſs of idolatry) implore;
Nor longer rob them of their nobleſt name.
O ye dividers of my time! ye bright
Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,
In your fair kalendar diſtinctly mark'd!

Since that authentic, radiant regiſter,
Tho' man inſpects it not, ſtands good againſt him;
Since you, and years, roll on, tho' man ſtands ſtill;
Teach me my days to number, and apply
My trembling heart to wiſdom; now beyond
All ſhadow of excuſe for fooling on.
Age ſmooths our path to prudence; ſweeps aſide
The ſnares, keen appetite, and paſſion, ſpread
To catch ſtray ſouls; and, woe to that grey head,
Whoſe folly would undo, what age has done!
Aid, then, aid, all ye ſtars!—much rather, THOU,
Great ARTIST! Thou, whoſe finger ſet aright
This exquiſite machine, with all its wheels,
Though intervolv'd, exact; and pointing out
Life's rapid, and irrevocable flight,
With ſuch an index fair, as none can miſs,
Who lifts an eye, nor ſleeps till it is clos'd,
Open mine eye, dread DEITY! to read
The tacit doctrine of thy works; to ſee
Things as they are, unalter'd through the glaſs
Of worldly wiſhes. Time, eternity!
('Tis theſe, miſ-meaſur'd, ruin all mankind)
Set them before me; let me lay them both
In equal ſcale, and learn their various weight.
Let time appear a moment, as it is;
And let eternity's full orb, at once,
Turn on my ſoul, and ſtrike it into heav'n.
When ſhall I ſee far more than charms me now?
Gaze on creation's model in thy breaſt
Unveil'd, nor wonder at the tranſcript more?
When, this vile, foreign, duſt, which ſmothers all
That travel earth's deep vale, ſhall I ſhake off?

When ſhall my ſoul her incarnation quit,
And, re-adopted to thy bleſs'd embrace,
Obtain her apotheoſis in THEE ?
  Do'ſt think, Lorenzo! this is wand'ring wide?
No, 'tis directly ſtriking at the mark ;
To wake thy dead devotion † was my point ;
And how I bleſs night's conſecrating ſhades,
Which to a temple turn an univerſe ;
Fills us with great ideas, full of heav'n,
And antidote the peſtilential earth !
In ev'ry ſtorm, that either frowns, or falls,
What an aſylum has the ſoul in pray'r!
And what a ſane is this, in which to pray !
And what a GOD muſt dwell in ſuch a ſane!
O what a genius muſt inform the ſkies!
And is Lorenzo's ſalamander-heart
Cold, and untouch'd, amid theſe ſacred fires ?
O ye nocturnal ſparks, ye glowing embers,
On heav'n's broad hearth ! who burn, or burn no more,
Who blaze, or die, as great JEHOVAH's breath,
Or blows you, or forbears ; aſſiſt my ſong ;
Pour your whole influence ; exorciſe his heart,
So long poſſeſs'd, and bring him back to man.
  And is Lorenzo a demurrer ſtill ?
Pride in thy parts provokes thee to conteſt
Truths ; which, conteſted, put thy parts to ſhame.
Nor ſhame they more Lorenzo's head than heart ;
A faithleſs heart, how deſpicably ſmall !
Too ſtrait, aught great, or gen'rous, to receive !
Fill'd with an atom ! fill'd, and foul'd, with ſelf!

† Page 129.

And ſelf-miſtaken! ſelf, that laſts an hour!
Inſtincts and paſſions, of the nobler kind,
Lie ſuffocated there; or they alone,
Reaſon apart, would wake high hope; and open,
To raviſh'd thought, that intellectual ſphere,
Where order, wiſdom, goodneſs, providence,
Their endleſs miracles of love diſplay,
And promiſe all the truly great deſire.
The mind that would be happy, muſt be great;
Great, in its wiſhes; great, in its ſurveys.
Extended views a narrow mind extend;
Puſh out its corrugate, expanſive make,
Which, ere long, more than planets ſhall embrace.
A man of compaſs makes a man of worth;
Divine contemplate, and become divine.
As man was made for glory, and for bliſs,
All littleneſs is an approach to woe;
Open thy boſom, ſet thy wiſhes wide,
And let in manhood; let in happineſs;
Admit the boundleſs theatre of thought
From nothing, up to GOD; which makes a man.
Take GOD from nature, nothing great is left;
Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing ſees;
Man's heart is in the jakes, and loves the mire.
Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
See thy diſtreſs! how cloſe art thou beſieg'd!
Beſieg'd by nature, thy proud ſceptic's foe!
Inclos'd by theſe innumerable worlds,
Sparkling conviction on the darkeſt mind,
As in a golden net of Providence,
How art thou caught, ſure captive of belief!
From this thy bleſs'd captivity, what art,

When ſhall my ſoul her incarnation quit,
And, re-adopted to thy bleſs'd embrace,
Obtain her apotheoſis in THEE ?
  Do'ſt think, Lorenzo! this is wand'ring wide?
No, 'tis directly ſtriking at the mark ;
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Which to a temple turn an univerſe ;
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And antidote the peſtilential earth !
In ev'ry ſtorm, that either frowns, or falls,
What an aſylum has the ſoul in pray'r!
And what a fane is this, in which to pray !
And what a GOD muſt dwell in ſuch a fane!
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† Page 129.

And self-mistaken! self, that lasts an hour!
Instincts and passions, of the nobler kind,
Lie suffocated there; or they alone,
Reason apart, would wake high hope; and open,
To ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere,
Where order, wisdom, goodness, providence,
Their endless miracles of love display,
And promise all the truly great desire.
The mind that would be happy, must be great;
Great, in its wishes; great, in its surveys.
Extended views a narrow mind extend;
Push out its corrugate, expansive make,
Which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace.
A man of compass makes a man of worth;
Divine contemplate, and become divine.
As man was made for glory, and for bliss,
All littleness is an approach to woe;
Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
And let in manhood; let in happiness;
Admit the boundless theatre of thought
From nothing, up to GOD; which makes a man.
Take GOD from nature, nothing great is left;
Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees;
Man's heart is in the jakes, and loves the mire.
Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
See thy distress! how close art thou besieg'd!
Besieg'd by nature, thy proud sceptic's foe!
Inclos'd by these innumerable worlds,
Sparkling conviction on the darkest mind,
As in a golden net of Providence,
How art thou caught, sure captive of belief!
From this thy bless'd captivity, what art,

What blaſphemy to reaſon, ſets thee free!
This ſcene is heav'n's indulgent violence:
Can'ſt thou bear up againſt this tide of glory?
What is earth boſom'd in theſe ambient orbs,
But, faith in GOD impos'd, and preſs'd on man?
Dar'ſt thou ſtill litigate thy deſp'rate cauſe,
Spite of theſe num'rous, awful witneſſes,
And doubt the depoſition of the ſkies?
O how laborious is thy way to ruin!
Laborious? 'tis impracticable quite;
To ſink beyond a doubt, in this debate,
With all his weight of wiſdom, and of will,
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
Some wiſh they did; but no man diſbelieves.
GOD is a ſpirit; ſpirit cannot ſtrike
Theſe groſs, material organs; GOD by man
As much is ſeen, as man a GOD can ſee,
In theſe aſtoniſhing exploits of power.
What order, beauty, motion, diſtance, ſize!
Concertion of deſign, how exquiſite!
How complicate, in their divine police!
Apt means! great ends! conſent to gen'ral good!—
Each attribute of theſe material gods,
So long, (and that with ſpecious pleas) ador'd,
A ſep'rate conqueſt gains o'er rebel thought;
And leads in triumph the whole mind of man.
Lorenzo! this may ſeem harangue to thee;
Such all is apt to ſeem, that thwarts our will.
And do'ſt thou, then, demand a ſimple proof
Of this great maſter-moral of the ſkies,
Unſkill'd, or diſinclin'd, to read it there?
Since 'tis the baſis, and all drops without it,

Take it, in one compact, unbroken chain.
Such proof inſiſts on an attentive ear;
'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,
And, for thy notice, ſtruggle with the world.
Retire;——the world ſhut out;——thy thoughts call
home;——
Imagination's airy wing repreſs;—
Lock up thy ſenſes;—let no paſſion ſtir;—
Wake all to reaſon;—let her reign alone;—
Then, in thy ſoul's deep ſilence, and the depth
Of nature's ſilence, midnight, thus inquire,
As I have done; and ſhall inquire no more.
In nature's channel, thus the queſtions run.

'What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know,
'But that I am; and, ſince I am, conclude
'Something eternal: Had there e'er been nought,
'Nought ſtill had been: Eternal there muſt be.—
'But what eternal?—why not human race?
'And Adam's anceſtors without an end?
'That's hard to be conceiv'd; ſince ev'ry link
'Of that long-chain'd ſucceſſion is ſo frail;
'Can ev'ry part depend, and not the whole?
'Yet grant it true; new difficulties riſe;
'I'm ſtill quite out at ſea; nor ſee the ſhore.
'Whence earth, and theſe bright orbs?—eternal too?—
'Grant matter was eternal; ſtill theſe orbs
'Would want ſome other father;—much deſign
'Is ſeen in all their motions, all their makes;
'Deſign implies intelligence, and art:
'That can't be from themſelves—or man; that art
'Man ſcarce can comprehend, could man beſtow?
'And nothing greater, yet allow'd, than man.—

'Who, motion, foreign to the ſmalleſt grain,
'Shot through vaſt maſſes of enormous weight?
'Who did brute matter's reſtive lump aſſume
'Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
'Has matter innate motion? then each atom,
'Aſſerting its indiſputable right
'To dance, would form an univerſe of duſt:
'Has matter none? then whence theſe glorious forms,
'And boundleſs flights, from ſhapeleſs, and repos'd?
'Has matter more than motion? has it thought,
'Judgment, and genius? is it deeply learn'd
'In mathematics? has it fram'd ſuch laws,
'Which, but to gueſs, a Newton made immortal?—
'If ſo, how each ſage atom laughs at me,
'Who think a clod inferior to a man!
'If art, to form; and counſel, to conduct;
'And that with greater far, than human ſkill,
'Reſides not in each block;—a GODHEAD reigns.—
'Grant, then, inviſible, eternal MIND;
'That granted, all is ſolv'd.—But, granting that,
'Draw I not o'er me ſtill a darker cloud?
'Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive?
'A being without origin, or end!—
'Hail, human liberty! there is no GOD—
'Yet, why? on either ſcheme that knot ſubſiſts;
'Subſiſt it muſt, in GOD, or human race;
'If in the laſt, how many knots beſide,
'Indiſſoluble all?—why chuſe it there,
'Where, choſen, ſtill ſubſiſt ten thouſand more?
'Reject it, where, that choſen, all the reſt
'Diſpers'd, leave reaſon's whole horizon clear?
'This is not reaſon's dictate; reaſon ſays,

'Close with the side where one grain turns the scale;
'What vast preponderance is here! can reason
'With louder voice exclaim—believe a GOD?
'And reason heard, is the sole mark of man.
'What things impossible must man think true,
'On any other system! and how strange
'To disbelieve, through mere credulity!'
If, in this chain, Lorenzo finds no flaw,
Let it for ever bind him to belief.
And where the link, in which a flaw he finds?——
And, if a GOD there is, that GOD how great!
How great that pow'r, whose providential care
Thro' these bright orbs dark centres darts a ray!
Of nature universal threads the whole!
And hangs creation, like a precious gem,
Tho' little, on the footstool of his throne!
That little gem, how large! a weight let fall
From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach
This distant earth? Say, then, Lorenzo! where,
Where, ends this mighty building? where, begin
The suburbs of creation? where, the wall
Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
Of non-existence? Nothing's strange abode!
Say, at what point of space JEHOVAH dropp'd
His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by;
Weigh'd worlds, and measur'd infinite, no more?
Where, rears his terminating pillar high
Its extra-mundane head? and says, to gods,
In characters illustrious as the sun,

'I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce
'The work accomplish'd; the creation clos'd:

'Shout, all ye gods; nor ſhout, ye gods, alone;
'Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
'That reſts, or rolls, ye heights, and depths, re-
ſound!
'Reſound! reſound! ye depths, and heights, re-
ſound!'

Hard are thoſe queſtions?——anſwer harder ſtill.
Is this the ſole exploit, the ſingle birth,
The ſolitary ſon, of pow'r divine?
Or has th' Almighty FATHER, with a breath,
Impregnated the womb of diſtant ſpace?
Has He not bid, in various provinces,
Brother-creations the dark bowels burſt
Of night primaeval; barren, now, no more?
And He, the central ſun, tranſpiercing all
Thoſe giant-generations, which diſport,
And dance, as motes, in his meridian ray;
That ray withdrawn, benighted, or abſorb'd,
In that abyſs of horror, whence they ſprung;
While chaos triumphs, repoſſeſs'd of all
Rival creation raviſh'd from his throne?
Chaos! of nature both the womb and grave!
Think'ſt thou my ſcheme, Lorenzo, ſpreads too
wide?
Is this extravagant?—no; this is juſt;
Juſt, in conjecture, tho' 'twere falſe in fact.
If 'tis an error, 'tis an error ſprung
From noble root, high-thought of the MOST HIGH.
But wherefore error? who can prove it ſuch?——
He that can ſet Omnipotence a bound.
Can man conceive beyond what God can do?

Nothing, but quite impoſſible, is hard.
He ſummons into being, with like eaſe,
A whole creation, and a ſingle grain.
Speaks he the word? a thouſand worlds are born!—
A thouſand worlds? there's ſpace for millions more;
And in what ſpace can his great fiat fail?
Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge
The warm imagination: Why condemn?
Why not indulge ſuch thoughts, as ſwell our hearts
With fuller admiration of that power,
Who gives our hearts with ſuch high thoughts to ſwell?
Why not indulge in his augmented praiſe?
Darts not his glory a ſtill brighter ray,
The leſs is left to chaos, and the realms
Of hideous night, where fancy ſtrays aghaſt:
And, tho' moſt talkative, makes no report?
Still ſeems my thought enormous; think again;
Experience 'ſelf ſhall aid thy lame belief.
Glaſſes (that revelation to the ſight!)
Have they not led us in the deep diſcloſe
Of fine-ſpun nature, exquiſitely ſmall;
And, though demonſtrated, ſtill ill-conceiv'd?
If then, on the reverſe, the mind would mount
In magnitude, what mind can mount too far,
To keep the balance, and creation poiſe?
Defect alone can err on ſuch a theme;
What is too great, if we the cauſe ſurvey?
Stupendous ARCHITECT! Thou, Thou art all!
My ſoul flies up and down in thoughts of thee,
And finds herſelf but at the centre ſtill!
I AM, thy name! exiſtence, all thine own!

Creation's nothing; flatter'd much, if ſtyl'd
'The thin, the fleeting atmoſphere of GOD.'
O for the voice—of what? of whom?—what voice
Can anſwer to my wants, in ſuch aſcent,
As dares to deem one univerſe too ſmall!
Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now fancy glows,
Fir'd in the vortex of Almighty power)
Is not this home-creation in the map
Of univerſal nature, as a ſpeck,
Like fair Britannia in our little ball;
Exceeding fair, and glorious, for its ſize,
But, elſewhere, far out-meaſur'd, far out-ſhone?
In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)
Canſt thou not figure it, an iſle, almoſt
Too ſmall for notice, in the vaſt of being;
Sever'd by mighty ſeas of unbuilt ſpace,
From other realms; from ampler continents
Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
Leſs northern, leſs remote from DEITY,
Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme;
Where ſouls in excellence make haſte, put forth
Luxuriant growths; nor the late autumn wait
Of human worth, but ripen ſoon to gods?
Yet why drown fancy in ſuch depths as theſe?
Return, preſumptuous rover! and confeſs
The bounds of man; nor blame them, as too ſmall,
Enjoy we not full ſcope in what is ſeen?
Full ample the dominions of the ſun!
Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,
The matchleſs monarch, from his flaming throne,
Laviſh of luſtre, throws his beams about him,
Farther, and faſter, than a thought can fly,

And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
This Heliopolis, by greater far,
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile, was built;
And He alone, who built it, can deſtroy.
Beyond this city, why ſtrays human thought?
One wonderful, enough for man to know!
One infinite, enough for man to range!
One firmament, enough for man to read!
O what voluminous inſtruction here!
What page of wiſdom is deny'd him? none;
If learning his chief leſſon makes him wiſe.
Nor is inſtruction, here, our only gain;
There dwells a noble pathos in the ſkies,
Which warms our paſſions, proſelytes our hearts.
How eloquently ſhines the glowing pole!
With what authority it gives its charge,
Remonſtrating great truths in ſtyle ſublime,
Tho' ſilent, loud! heard earth around; above
The planets heard; and not unheard in hell;
Hell has her wonder, tho' too proud to praiſe.
Is earth, then, more infernal? has ſhe thoſe,
Who neither praiſe (Lorenzo!) nor admire?
  Lorenzo's admiration, pre-ingag'd,
Ne'er aſk'd the moon one queſtion; never held
Leaſt correſpondence with a ſingle ſtar;
Ne'er rear'd an altar to the queen of heaven
Walking in brightneſs; or her train ador'd.
Their ſublunary rivals have long ſince
Engroſs'd his whole devotion; ſtars malign,
Which made their fond aſtronomer run mad;
Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;
Cauſe him to ſacrifice his fame and peace

To momentary madneſs, call'd delight.
Idolater, more groſs than ever kiſs'd
The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out
The blood to Jove!——O THOU, to whom belongs
All ſacrifice! O thou great Jove unfeign'd!
Divine inſtructor! thy firſt volume, this,
For man's peruſal; all in capitals!
In moon and ſtars (heav'n's golden alphabet!)
Emblaz'd to ſeize the ſight; who runs, may read;
Who reads, can underſtand 'Tis unconfin'd
To Chriſtian land, or Jew'ry; fairly writ,
In language univerſal, to mankind:
A language, lofty to the learn'd; yet plain
To thoſe that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
Or, from its huſk, ſtrike out the bounding grain.
A language, worthy the great MIND, that ſpeaks!
Preface, and comment, to the ſacred page!
Which oft refers its reader to the ſkies,
As pre-ſuppoſing his firſt leſſon there,
And ſcripture-ſelf a fragment, that unread.
Stupendous book of wiſdom, to the wiſe!
Stupendous book! and open'd, Night! by thee.
By thee much open'd, I confeſs, O Night!
Yet more I wiſh; but how ſhall I prevail?
Say, gentle night! whoſe modeſt, maiden beams,
Give us a new creation, and preſent
The world's great picture ſoften'd to the ſight;
Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent ſtill,
Say, thou, whoſe mild dominion's ſilver key
Unlocks our hemiſphere, and ſets to view
Worlds beyond number; worlds conceal'd by day
Behind the proud, and envious ſtar of noon!
Canſt thou not draw a deeper ſcene?——and ſhew

The mighty Potenate, to whom belong
These rich regalia pompously display'd
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,
I gaze around; I search on ev'ry side——
O for a glimpse of HIM my soul adores!
As the chas'd hart, amid the desart waste,
Pants for the living stream; for him who made her,
So pants the thirsty soul, amid the blank
Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess! where?
Where, blazes his bright court? where burns his throne?
Thou know'st; for thou art near him; by thee, round
His grand pavilion, sacred fame reports
The sable curtain drawn. If not, can none
Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing,
Who travel far, discover where he dwells?
A star his dwelling pointed out below.
Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazaroth!
And thou, Orion! of still keener eye!
Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves,
And bring them out of tempest into port!
On which hand must I bend my course to find him?
These courtiers keep the secret of their KING;
I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.
I wake; and waking, climb night's radiant scale,
From sphere to sphere; the steps by nature set
For man's ascent; at once to tempt and aid;
To tempt his eye, and aid his tow'ring thought;
Till it arrives at the great goal of all.
In ardent contemplation's rapid car,
From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.
How swift I mount! diminish'd earth recedes;

I paſs the moon; and, from her farther ſide,
Pierce heav'n's blue curtain, ſtrike into remote;
Where, with his lifted tube, the ſubtile ſage
His artificial, airy journey takes,
And to celeſtial lengthens human ſight.
I pauſe at every planet on my road,
And aſk for HIM who gives their orbs to roll,
Their foreheads fair to ſhine. From Saturn's ring,
In which, of earths an army might be loſt,
With the bold comet, take my bolder flight,
Amid thoſe ſov'reign glories of the ſkies,
Of independent, native luſtre, proud;
The ſouls of ſyſtems! and the lords of life,
Thro' their wide empires!—what behold I now?
A wilderneſs of wonders burning round;
Where larger ſuns inhabit higher ſpheres;
Perhaps the villas of deſcending gods!
Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun;
'Tis but the threſhold of the Deity;
Or, far beneath it, I am grovelling ſtill.
Nor is it ſtrange; I built on a miſtake;
The grandeur of his works, whence folly ſought
For aid, to reaſon ſets his glory higher;
Who built thus high for worms (mere worms to him;)
O where, Lorenzo! muſt the builder dwell?
Pauſe, then; and, for a moment, here reſpire——
If human thought can keep its ſtation here.
Where am I?—where is earth?—nay, where art thou,
O ſun?—Is the ſun turn'd recluſe?—and are
His boaſted expeditions ſhort to mine?—
To mine, how ſhort! on nature's Alps I ſtand,
And ſee a thouſand firmaments beneath!

A thouſand ſyſtems! as a thouſand grains!
So much a ſtranger, and ſo late arriv'd,
How can man's curious ſpirit not inquire,
What are the natives of this world ſublime,
Of this ſo foreign, un-terreſtrial ſphere,
Where mortal, untranſlated, never ſtray'd?

'O ye, as diſtant from my little home,
'As ſwifteſt ſun-beams in an age can fly!
'Far from my native element I roam,
'In queſt of new, and wonderful, to man.
'What province this, of His immenſe domain,
'Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
'Ye bord'rers on the coaſt of bliſs! what are you?
'A colony from heav'n? or, only rais'd,
'By frequent viſit from heav'n's neighbouring realms,
'To ſecondary gods, and half-divine?——
'Whate'er your nature, this is paſt diſpute,
'Far other life you live, far other tongue
'You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
'Than man. How various are the works of God!
'But ſay, what thought? is reaſon here inthron'd,
'And abſolute? or ſenſe in arms againſt her?
'Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd?
'Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
'And had your Eden an abſtemious Eve?
'Our Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree,
'And aſk their Adams—"Who would not be wiſe?"
'Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem'd?
'And if redeem'd——is your redeemer ſcorn'd?
'Is this your final reſidence? if not,
'Change you your ſcene, tranſlated? or by death?
'And if by death; what death?—know you diſeaſe?

'Or horrid war?——with war, this fatal hour,
'Europa groans (ſo call we a ſmall field,
'Where kings run mad.) In our world, death deputes
'Intemperance to do the work of age;
'And, hanging up the quiver nature gave him,
'As flow of execution, for diſpatch
'Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them ſlay
'Their ſheep, (the filly ſheep they fleec'd before)
'And toſs him twice ten thouſand at a meal.
'Sit all your executioners on thrones?
'With you, can rage for plunder make a God?
'And bloodſhed waſh out every other ſtain?—
'But you, perhaps, can't bleed: From matter groſs
'Your ſpirits clean, are delicately clad
'In fine-ſpun aether; privileg'd to ſoar,
'Unloaded, uninfected; how unlike
'The lot of man! how few of human race
'By their own mud unmurder'd! how we wage
'Self-war eternal!—is your painful day
'Of hardy conflict o'er? or, are you ſtill
'Raw candidates at ſchool? and have you thoſe
'Who diſaffect reverſions, as with us?——
'But what are we? you never heard of man,
'Or earth; the bedlam of the univerſe!
'Where reaſon (undiſeas'd with you) runs mad,
'And nurſes folly's children as her own;
'Fond of the fouleſt. In the ſacred mount
'Of holineſs, where reaſon is pronounc'd
'Infallible; and thunders, like a god;
'Ev'n there, by ſaints, the daemons are outdone;
'What theſe think wrong, our ſaints refine to right;
'And kindly teach dull hell her own black arts;

'Satan, inſtructed, o'er their morals ſmiles.——
'But this, how ſtrange to you, who know not man!
'Has the leaſt rumour of our race arriv'd?
'Call'd here Elijah, in his flaming car?
'Paſs'd by you the good Enoch, on his road
'To thoſe fair fields, whence Lucifer was hurl'd;
'Who bruſh'd, perhaps, your ſphere, in his deſcent,
'Stain'd your pure cryſtal aether, or let fall
'A ſhort eclipſe from his portentous ſhade?
'O! that the fiend had lodg'd on ſome broad orb
'Athwart his way; nor reach'd his preſent home,
'Then blacken'd earth with footſteps foul'd in hell,
'Nor waſh'd in ocean, as from Rome he paſs'd
'To Britain's iſle; too, too, conſpicuous there!'
But this is all digreſſion: Where is He,
That o'er heav'n's battlements the felon hurl'd
To groans, and chains, and darkneſs? where is He,
Who ſees creation's ſummit in a vale?
He, whom, while man is man, he can't but ſeek;
And if he finds, commences more than man?
O for a teleſcope his throne to reach!
Tell me, ye learn'd on earth! or bleſt above!
Ye ſearching, ye Newtonian angels! tell,
Where your great Maſter's orb? his planets, where?
Thoſe conſcious ſatellites, thoſe morning-ſtars,
First-born of DEITY! from central love,
By veneration moſt profound, thrown off;
By ſweet attraction, no leſs ſtrongly drawn;
Aw'd, and yet raptur'd; ra tur'd, yet ſerene;
Paſt thought, illuſtrious, but with borrow'd beams;
In ſtill approaching circles, ſtill remote,
Revolving round the ſun's eternal Sire?

Or ſent, in lines direct, on embaſſies
To nations—in what latitude?—beyond
Terreſtrial thought's horizon!—and on what
High errands ſent?—here human effort ends;
And leaves me ſtill a ſtranger to his throne.
Full well it might! I quite miſtook my road.
Born in an age more curious, than devout;
More fond to fix the place of heav'n, or hell,
Than ſtudious this to ſhun, or that ſecure.
'Tis not the curious, but the pious path,
That leads me to my point: Lorenzo! know,
Without or ſtar, or angel, for their guide,
Who worſhip GOD, ſhall find him. Humble love,
And not proud reaſon, keeps the door of heav'n;
Love finds admiſſion, where proud ſcience fails.
Man's ſcience is the culture of his heart;
And not to loſe his plummet in the depths
Of nature, or the more profound of God.
Either to know, is an attempt that ſets
The wiſeſt on a level with the fool.
To fathom nature (ill-attempted here!)
Paſt doubt, is deep philoſophy above;
Higher degrees in bliſs archangels take,
As deeper learn'd; the deepeſt, learning ſtill.
For, what a thunder of Omnipotence
(So might I dare to ſpeak!) is ſeen in all!
In man! in earth! in more amazing ſkies!
Teaching this leſſon, pride is loth to learn—
'Not deeply to diſcern, not much to know,
'Mankind was born to wonder, and adore.'
And is there cauſe for higher wonder ſtill,
Than that which ſtruck us from our paſt ſurveys?

Yes; and for deeper adoration too.
From my late airy travel unconfin'd,
Have I learn'd nothing?—Yes, Lorenzo! this;
Each of theſe ſtars is a religious houſe;
I ſaw their altars ſmoke, their incenſe riſe,
And heard Hoſannas ring through every ſphere,
A ſeminary fraught with future gods.
Nature all o'er is conſecrated ground,
Teeming with growths immortal, and divine.
The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand,
Leaves nothing waſte; but ſows theſe fiery fields
With ſeeds of reaſon, which to virtues riſe
Beneath his genial ray; and, if eſcap'd
The peſtilential blaſts of ſtubborn will,
When grown mature, are gather'd for the ſkies.
And is devotion thought too much on earth,
When beings, ſo inperior, homage boaſt,
And triumph in proſtrations to the throne?
But wherefore more of planets, or of ſtars?
Æthereal journeys, and, diſcover'd there,
Ten-thouſand worlds, ten thouſand ways devout,
All nature ſending incenſe to the throne,
Except the bold Lorenzo's of our ſphere?
Op'ning the ſolemn ſources of my ſoul,
Since I have pour'd, like feign'd Eridanus,
My flowing numbers o'er the flaming ſkies,
Nor ſee, of fancy, or of fact, what more,
Invites the muſe—here turn we, and review
Our paſt nocturnal landſcape wide:—Then, ſay,
Say, then, Lorenzo! with what burſt of heart,
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
Muſt man exclaim, adoring, and aghaſt?

'O what a root! O what a branch is here!
'O what a father! what a family!
'Worlds! ſyſtems! and creations!—and creations,
'In one agglomerated cluſter, hung,
'†Great VINE, on THEE, on THEE the cluſter hangs;
'The filial cluſter! infinitely ſpread
'In glowing globes, with various being fraught:
'And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.
'Or, ſhall I ſay (for who can ſay enough?)
'A conſtellation of ten thouſand gems,
'(And, O! of what dimenſion! of what weight!)
'Set in one ſignet, flames on the right-hand
'Of Majeſty divine! the blazing ſeal,
'That deeply ſtamps on all created mind,
'Indelible, his ſov'reign attributes,
'Omnipotence, and love! that, paſſing bound;
'And this, ſurpaſſing that. Nor ſtop we here,
'For want of pow'r in GOD, but thought in man.
'Even this acknowledg'd, leaves us ſtill in debt;
'If greater aught, that greater all is thine.
'Dread SIRE!—accept this miniature of thee;
'And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
'In which archangels might have fail'd, unblam'd.'
How ſuch ideas of th' Almighty's pow'r,
And ſuch ideas of th' Almighty's plan,
(Ideas not abſurd) diſtend the thought
Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!
The fulneſs of the DEITY breaks forth
In inconceivables to men, and gods.
Think, then, O think; nor ever drop the thought;

† John xv. 1.

How low muſt man deſcend, when gods adore!—
Have I not, then, accompliſh'd my proud boaſt?
Did I not tell thee, '† We would mount, Lorenzo!
'And kindle our devotion at the ſtars?'
And have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?
And art all adamant? and do'ſt confute
All urg'd with one irrefragable ſmile?
Lorenzo! mirth, how miſerable here!
Swear by the ſtars, by HIM who made them, ſwear,
Thy heart, henceforth, ſhall be as pure as they:
Then thou, like them, ſhalt ſhine; like them, ſhalt riſe
From low to lofty; from obſcure to bright;
By due gradation, nature's ſacred law.
The ſtars, from whence?—aſk Chaos—he can tell.
Theſe bright temptations to idolatry,
From darkneſs, and confuſion, took their birth;
Sons of deformity! from fluid dregs
Tartarean, firſt they roſe to maſſes rude;
And then, to ſpheres opaque; then dimly ſhone;
Then brighten'd; then blaz'd out in perfect day.
Nature delights in progreſs; in advance
From worſe to better: But, when minds aſcend,
Progreſs, in part, depends upon themſelves.
Heav'n aids exertion; greater makes the great;
The voluntary little leſſens more.
O be a man! and thou ſhalt be a god!
And half ſelf-made!——ambition how divine!
O thou, ambitious of diſgrace alone!
Still undevout? unkindled?——tho' high-taught,

† Page 129.

School'd by the ſkies; and pupil of the ſtars;
Rank coward to the faſhionable world!
Art thou aſham'd to bend thy knee to heav'n?
Curs'd fume of pride, exhal'd from deepeſt hell!
Pride in religion is man's higheſt praiſe.
Bent on deſtruction! and in love with death!
Not all theſe luminaries, quench'd at once,
Were half ſo ſad, as one benighted mind,
Which gropes for happineſs, and meets deſpair.
How, like a widow in her weeds, the night,
Amid her glimm'ring tapers, ſilent ſits!
How ſorrowful, how deſolate, ſhe weeps
Perpetual dews, and ſaddens nature's ſcene!
A ſcene more ſad ſin makes the darken'd ſoul,
All comfort kills, nor leaves one ſpark alive.

Though blind of heart, ſtill open is thine eye:
Why ſuch magnificence in all thou ſeeſt?
Of matter's grandeur, know, one end is this,
To tell the rational, who gazes on it—
'Though that immenſely great, ſtill greater He
'Whoſe breaſt, capacious, can embrace, and lodge,
'Unburden'd, nature's univerſal ſcheme;
'Can graſp creation with a ſingle thought;
'Creation graſp; and not exclude its SIRE.'—
To tell him farther—'It behoves him much
'To guard th' important, yet depending, fate
'Of being, brighter than a thouſand ſuns;
'One ſingle ray of thought outſhines them all.'
And if man hears obedient, ſoon he'll ſoar
Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
His purple wing bedrop'd with eyes of gold,

Riſing, where thought is now deny'd to riſe,
Look down triumphant on theſe dazzling ſpheres.
Why then perſiſt ?—no mortal ever liv'd
But, dying, he pronounc'd (when words are true!)
The whole that charms thee, abſolutely vain ;
Vain, and far worſe !—think thou, with dying men ;
O condeſcend to think as angels think !
O tolerate a chance for happineſs !
Our nature ſuch, ill choice inſures ill fate ;
And hell had been, though there had been no God.
Do'ſt thou not know, my new aſtronomer !
Earth, turning from the ſun, brings night to man ?
Man, turning from his God, brings endleſs night :
Where thou can'ſt read no morals, find no friend,
Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
How deep the darkneſs ! and the groan how loud !
And far, how far, from lambent are the flames !
Such is Lorenzo's purchaſe ! ſuch his praiſe !
The proud, the politic, Lorenzo's praiſe !
Though, in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,
I've half read o'er the volume of the ſkies.

For think not thou haſt heard all this from me ;
My ſong but echoes what great nature ſpeaks :
What has ſhe ſpoken ?—thus the goddeſs ſpoke,
Thus ſpeaks for ever :—' Place, at nature's head,
' A ſov'reign, which o'er all things rolls his eye,
' Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,
' But, above all, diffuſes endleſs good ;
' To whom, for ſure redreſs, the wrong'd may fly ;
' The vile, for mercy ; and the pain'd, for peace ;
' By whom, the various tenants of theſe ſpheres,
' Diverſify'd in fortunes, place, and powers,

When ſhall my ſoul her incarnation quit,
And, re-adopted to thy bleſs'd embrace,
Obtain her apotheoſis in THEE ?
Do'ſt think, Lorenzo! this is wand'ring wide?
No, 'tis directly ſtriking at the mark ;
To wake thy dead devotion † was my point ;
And how I bleſs night's conſecrating ſhades,
Which to a temple turn an univerſe ;
Fills us with great ideas, full of heav'n,
And antidote the peſtilential earth !
In ev'ry ſtorm, that either frowns, or falls,
What an aſylum has the ſoul in pray'r!
And what a ſane is this, in which to pray !
And what a GOD muſt dwell in ſuch a ſane!
O what a genius muſt inform the ſkies!
And is Lorenzo's ſalamander-heart
Cold, and untouch'd, amid theſe ſacred fires ?
O ye nocturnal ſparks, ye glowing embers,
On heav'n's broad hearth ! who burn, or burn no more,
Who blaze, or die, as great JEHOVAH's breath,
Or blows you, or forbears ; aſſiſt my ſong ;
Pour your whole influence ; exorciſe his heart,
So long poſſeſs'd, and bring him back to man.
And is Lorenzo a demurrer ſtill ?
Pride in thy parts provokes thee to conteſt
Truths ; which, conteſted, put thy parts to ſhame.
Nor ſhame they more Lorenzo's head than heart ;
A faithleſs heart, how deſpicably ſmall !
Too ſtrait, aught great, or gen'rous, to receive !
Fill'd with an atom ! fill'd, and foul'd, with ſelf!

† Page 129.

And ſelf-miſtaken! ſelf, that laſts an hour!
Inſtincts and paſſions, of the nobler kind,
Lie ſuffocated there; or they alone,
Reaſon apart, would wake high hope; and open,
To raviſh'd thought, that intellectual ſphere,
Where order, wiſdom, goodneſs, providence,
Their endleſs miracles of love diſplay,
And promiſe all the truly great deſire.
The mind that would be happy, muſt be great;
Great, in its wiſhes; great, in its ſurveys.
Extended views a narrow mind extend;
Puſh out its corrugate, expanſive make,
Which, ere long, more than planets ſhall embrace.
A man of compaſs makes a man of worth;
Divine contemplate, and become divine.
As man was made for glory, and for bliſs,
All littleneſs is an approach to woe;
Open thy boſom, ſet thy wiſhes wide,
And let in manhood; let in happineſs;
Admit the boundleſs theatre of thought
From nothing, up to GOD; which makes a man.
Take GOD from nature, nothing great is left;
Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing ſees;
Man's heart is in the jakes, and loves the mire.
Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
See thy diſtreſs! how cloſe art thou beſieg'd!
Beſieg'd by nature, thy proud ſceptic's foe!
Inclos'd by theſe innumerable worlds,
Sparkling conviction on the darkeſt mind,
As in a golden net of Providence,
How art thou caught, ſure captive of belief!
From this thy bleſs'd captivity, what art,

What blaſphemy to reaſon, ſets thee free!
This ſcene is heav'n's indulgent violence:
Can'ſt thou bear up againſt this tide of glory?
What is earth boſom'd in theſe ambient orbs,
But, faith in GOD impos'd, and preſs'd on man?
Dar'ſt thou ſtill litigate thy deſp'rate cauſe,
Spite of theſe num'rous, awful witneſſes,
And doubt the depoſition of the ſkies?
O how laborious is thy way to ruin!
Laborious? 'tis impracticable quite;
To ſink beyond a doubt, in this debate,
With all his weight of wiſdom, and of will,
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
Some wiſh they did; but no man diſbelieves.
GOD is a ſpirit; ſpirit cannot ſtrike
Theſe groſs, material organs; GOD by man
As much is ſeen, as man a GOD can ſee,
In theſe aſtoniſhing exploits of power.
What order, beauty, motion, diſtance, ſize!
Concertion of deſign, how exquiſite!
How complicate, in their divine police!
Apt means! great ends! conſent to gen'ral good!—
Each attribute of theſe material gods,
So long, (and that with ſpecious pleas) ador'd,
A ſep'rate conqueſt gains o'er rebel thought;
And leads in triumph the whole mind of man.
Lorenzo! this may ſeem harangue to thee;
Such all is apt to ſeem, that thwarts our will.
And do'ſt thou, then, demand a ſimple proof
Of this great maſter-moral of the ſkies,
Unſkill'd, or diſinclin'd, to read it there?
Since 'tis the baſis, and all drops without it,

Take it, in one compact, unbroken chain.
Such proof inſiſts on an attentive ear;
'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,
And, for thy notice, ſtruggle with the world.
Retire;——the world ſhut out;——thy thoughts call
home;——
Imagination's airy wing repreſs;—
Lock up thy ſenſes;—let no paſſion ſtir;—
Wake all to reaſon;—let her reign alone;—
Then, in thy ſoul's deep ſilence, and the depth
Of nature's ſilence, midnight, thus inquire,
As I have done; and ſhall inquire no more.
In nature's channel, thus the queſtions run.

'What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know,
'But that I am; and, ſince I am, conclude
'Something eternal: Had there e'er been nought,
'Nought ſtill had been: Eternal there muſt be.—
'But what eternal?—why not human race?
'And Adam's anceſtors without an end?
'That's hard to be conceiv'd; ſince ev'ry link
'Of that long-chain'd ſucceſſion is ſo frail;
'Can ev'ry part depend, and not the whole?
'Yet grant it true; new difficulties riſe;
'I'm ſtill quite out at ſea; nor ſee the ſhore.
'Whence earth, and theſe bright orbs?—eternal too?—
'Grant matter was eternal; ſtill theſe orbs
'Would want ſome other father;—much deſign
'Is ſeen in all their motions, all their makes;
'Deſign implies intelligence, and art:
'That can't be from themſelves—or man; that art
'Man ſcarce can comprehend, could man beſtow?
'And nothing greater, yet allow'd, than man.—

'Who, motion, foreign to the ſmalleſt grain,
'Shot through vaſt maſſes of enormous weight?
'Who did brute matter's reſtive lump aſſume
'Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
'Has matter innate motion? then each atom,
'Aſſerting its indiſputable right
'To dance, would form an univerſe of duſt:
'Has matter none? then whence theſe glorious forms,
'And boundleſs flights, from ſhapeleſs, and repos'd?
'Has matter more than motion? has it thought,
'Judgment, and genius? is it deeply learn'd
'In mathematics? has it fram'd ſuch laws,
'Which, but to gueſs, a Newton made immortal?—
'If ſo, how each ſage atom laughs at me,
'Who think a clod inferior to a man!
'If art, to form; and counſel, to conduct;
'And that with greater far, than human ſkill,
'Reſides not in each block;—a GODHEAD reigns.—
'Grant, then, inviſible, eternal MIND;
'That granted, all is ſolv'd.—But, granting that,
'Draw I not o'er me ſtill a darker cloud?
'Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive?
'A being without origin, or end!—
'Hail, human liberty! there is no GOD—
'Yet, why? on either ſcheme that knot ſubſiſts;
'Subſiſt it muſt, in GOD, or human race;
'If in the laſt, how many knots beſide,
'Indiſſoluble all?—why chuſe it there,
'Where, choſen, ſtill ſubſiſt ten thouſand more?
'Reject it, where, that choſen, all the reſt
'Diſpers'd, leave reaſon's whole horizon clear?
'This is not reaſon's dictate; reaſon ſays,

'Close with the side where one grain turns the scale;
'What vast preponderance is here! can reason
'With louder voice exclaim—believe a GOD?
'And reason heard, is the sole mark of man.
'What things impossible must man think true,
'On any other system! and how strange
'To disbelieve, through mere credulity!'
If, in this chain, Lorenzo finds no flaw,
Let it for ever bind him to belief.
And where the link, in which a flaw he finds?——
And, if a GOD there is, that GOD how great!
How great that pow'r, whose providential care
Thro' these bright orbs dark centres darts a ray!
Of nature universal threads the whole!
And hangs creation, like a precious gem,
Tho' little, on the footstool of his throne!
That little gem, how large! a weight let fall
From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach
This distant earth? Say, then, Lorenzo! where,
Where, ends this mighty building? where, begin
The suburbs of creation? where, the wall
Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
Of non-existence? Nothing's strange abode!
Say, at what point of space JEHOVAH dropp'd
His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by;
Weigh'd worlds, and measur'd infinite, no more?
Where, rears his terminating pillar high
Its extra-mundane head? and says, to gods,
In characters illustrious as the sun,

'I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce
'The work accomplish'd; the creation clos'd:

'Shout, all ye gods; nor ſhout, ye gods, alone;
'Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
'That reſts, or rolls, ye heights, and depths, re-
found!
'Reſound! reſound! ye depths, and heights, re-
ſound!'

Hard are thoſe queſtions?——anſwer harder ſtill.
Is this the ſole exploit, the ſingle birth,
The ſolitary ſon, of pow'r divine?
Or has th' Almighty FATHER, with a breath,
Impregnated the womb of diſtant ſpace?
Has He not bid, in various provinces,
Brother-creations the dark bowels burſt
Of night primaeval; barren, now, no more?
And He, the central ſun, tranſpiercing all
Thoſe giant-generations, which diſport,
And dance, as motes, in his meridian ray;
That ray withdrawn, benighted, or abſorb'd,
In that abyſs of horror, whence they ſprung;
While chaos triumphs, repoſſeſs'd of all
Rival creation raviſh'd from his throne?
Chaos! of nature both the womb and grave!
Think'ſt thou my ſcheme, Lorenzo, ſpreads too
wide?
Is this extravagant?—no; this is juſt;
Juſt, in conjecture, tho' 'twere falſe in fact.
If 'tis an error, 'tis an error ſprung
From noble root, high-thought of the MOST HIGH.
But wherefore error? who can prove it ſuch?——
He that can ſet Omnipotence a bound.
Can man conceive beyond what God can do?

Nothing, but quite impoſſible, is hard.
He ſummons into being, with like eaſe,
A whole creation, and a ſingle grain.
Speaks he the word? a thouſand worlds are born!—
A thouſand worlds? there's ſpace for millions more;
And in what ſpace can his great fiat fail?
Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge
The warm imagination: Why condemn?
Why not indulge ſuch thoughts, as ſwell our hearts
With fuller admiration of that power,
Who gives our hearts with ſuch high thoughts to ſwell?
Why not indulge in his augmented praiſe?
Darts not his glory a ſtill brighter ray,
The leſs is left to chaos, and the realms
Of hideous night, where fancy ſtrays aghaſt:
And, tho' moſt talkative, makes no report?
Still ſeems my thought enormous; think again;
Experience 'ſelf ſhall aid thy lame belief.
Glaſſes (that revelation to the ſight!)
Have they not led us in the deep diſcloſe
Of fine-ſpun nature, exquiſitely ſmall;
And, though demonſtrated, ſtill ill-conceiv'd?
If then, on the reverſe, the mind would mount
In magnitude, what mind can mount too far,
To keep the balance, and creation poiſe?
Defect alone can err on ſuch a theme;
What is too great, if we the cauſe ſurvey?
Stupendous ARCHITECT! Thou, Thou art all!
My ſoul flies up and down in thoughts of thee,
And finds herſelf but at the centre ſtill!
I AM, thy name! exiſtence, all thine own!

Creation's nothing; flatter'd much, if ſtyl'd
'The thin, the fleeting atmoſphere of GOD.'
O for the voice—of what? of whom?—what voice
Can anſwer to my wants, in ſuch aſcent,
As dares to deem one univerſe too ſmall!
Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now fancy glows,
Fir'd in the vortex of Almighty power)
Is not this home-creation in the map
Of univerſal nature, as a ſpeck,
Like fair Britannia in our little ball;
Exceeding fair, and glorious, for its ſize,
But, elſewhere, far out-meaſur'd, far out-ſhone?
In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)
Canſt thou not figure it, an iſle, almoſt
Too ſmall for notice, in the vaſt of being;
Sever'd by mighty ſeas of unbuilt ſpace,
From other realms; from ampler continents
Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
Leſs northern, leſs remote from DEITY,
Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme;
Where ſouls in excellence make haſte, put forth
Luxuriant growths; nor the late autumn wait
Of human worth, but ripen ſoon to gods?
Yet why drown fancy in ſuch depths as theſe?
Return, preſumptuous rover! and confeſs
The bounds of man; nor blame them, as too ſmall.
Enjoy we not full ſcope in what is ſeen?
Full ample the dominions of the ſun!
Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,
The matchleſs monarch, from his flaming throne,
Laviſh of luſtre, throws his beams about him,
Farther, and faſter, than a thought can fly,

And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
This Heliopolis, by greater far,
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile, was built;
And He alone, who built it, can deſtroy.
Beyond this city, why ſtrays human thought?
One wonderful, enough for man to know!
One infinite, enough for man to range!
One firmament, enough for man to read!
O what voluminous inſtruction here!
What page of wiſdom is deny'd him? none;
If learning his chief leſſon makes him wiſe.
Nor is inſtruction, here, our only gain;
There dwells a noble pathos in the ſkies,
Which warms our paſſions, proſelytes our hearts.
How eloquently ſhines the glowing pole!
With what authority it gives its charge,
Remonſtrating great truths in ſtyle ſublime,
Tho' ſilent, loud! heard earth around; above
The planets heard; and not unheard in hell;
Hell has her wonder, tho' too proud to praiſe.
Is earth, then, more infernal? has ſhe thoſe,
Who neither praiſe (Lorenzo!) nor admire?
  Lorenzo's admiration, pre-ingag'd,
Ne'er aſk'd the moon one queſtion; never held
Leaſt correſpondence with a ſingle ſtar;
Ne'er rear'd an altar to the queen of heaven
Walking in brightneſs; or her train ador'd.
Their ſublunary rivals have long ſince
Engroſs'd his whole devotion; ſtars malign,
Which made their fond aſtronomer run mad;
Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;
Cauſe him to ſacrifice his fame and peace

To momentary madneſs, call'd delight.
Idolater, more groſs than ever kiſs'd
The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out
The blood to Jove!——O THOU, to whom belongs
All ſacrifice! O thou great Jove unfeign'd!
Divine inſtructor! thy firſt volume, this,
For man's peruſal; all in capitals!
In moon and ſtars (heav'n's golden alphabet!)
Emblaz'd to ſeize the ſight; who runs, may read;
Who reads, can underſtand 'Tis unconfin'd
To Chriſtian land, or Jew'ry; fairly writ,
In language univertal, to mankind:
A language, lofty to the learn'd; yet plain
To thoſe that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
Or, from its huſk, ſtrike out the bounding grain.
A language, worthy the great MIND, that ſpeaks!
Preface, and comment, to the ſacred page!
Which oft refers its reader to the ſkies,
As pre-ſuppoſing his firſt leſſon there,
And ſcripture-ſelf a fragment, that unread.
Stupendous book of wiſdom, to the wiſe!
Stupendous book! and open'd, Night! by thee.
By thee much open'd, I confeſs, O Night!
Yet more I wiſh; but how ſhall I prevail?
Say, gentle night! whoſe modeſt, maiden beams,
Give us a new creation, and preſent
The world's great picture ſoften'd to the ſight;
Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent ſtill,
Say, thou, whoſe mild dominion's ſilver key
Unlocks our hemiſphere, and ſets to view
Worlds beyond number; worlds conceal'd by day
Behind the proud, and envious ſtar of noon!
Canſt thou not draw a deeper ſcene?——and ſhew

The mighty Potenate, to whom belong
Theſe rich regalia pompouſly diſplay'd
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,
I gaze around; I ſearch on ev'ry ſide——
O for a glimpſe of HIM my ſoul adores!
As the chas'd hart, amid the deſart waſte,
Pants for the living ſtream; for him who made her,
So pants the thirſty ſoul, amid the blank
Of ſublunary joys. Say, goddeſs! where?
Where, blazes his bright court? where burns his throne?
Thou know'ſt; for thou art near him; by thee, round
His grand pavilion, ſacred fame reports
The ſable curtain drawn. If not, can none
Of thy fair daughter-train, ſo ſwift of wing,
Who travel far, diſcover where he dwells?
A ſtar his dwelling pointed out below.
Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazaroth!
And thou, Orion! of ſtill keener eye!
Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves,
And bring them out of tempeſt into port!
On which hand muſt I bend my courſe to find him?
Theſe courtiers keep the ſecret of their KING;
I wake whole nights, in vain, to ſteal it from them.
I wake; and waking, climb night's radiant ſcale,
From ſphere to ſphere; the ſteps by nature ſet
For man's aſcent; at once to tempt and aid;
To tempt his eye, and aid his tow'ring thought;
Till it arrives at the great goal of all.
In ardent contemplation's rapid car,
From earth, as from my barrier, I ſet out.
How ſwift I mount! diminiſh'd earth recedes;

I paſs the moon; and, from her farther ſide,
Pierce heav'n's blue curtain, ſtrike into remote;
Where, with his lifted tube, the ſubtile ſage
His artificial, airy journey takes,
And to celeſtial lengthens human ſight.
I pauſe at every planet on my road,
And aſk for HIM who gives their orbs to roll,
Their foreheads fair to ſhine. From Saturn's ring,
In which, of earths an army might be loſt,
With the bold comet, take my bolder flight,
Amid thoſe ſov'reign glories of the ſkies,
Of independent, native luſtre, proud;
The ſouls of ſyſtems! and the lords of life,
Thro' their wide empires!—what behold I now?
A wilderneſs of wonders burning round;
Where larger ſuns inhabit higher ſpheres;
Perhaps the villas of deſcending gods!
Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun;
'Tis but the threſhold of the Deity;
Or, far beneath it, I am grovelling ſtill.
Nor is it ſtrange; I built on a miſtake;
The grandeur of his works, whence folly ſought
For aid, to reaſon ſets his glory higher;
Who built thus high for worms (mere worms to him;)
O where, Lorenzo! muſt the builder dwell?
Pauſe, then; and, for a moment, here reſpire——
If human thought can keep its ſtation here.
Where am I?—where is earth?—nay, where art thou,
O ſun?—Is the ſun turn'd recluſe?—and are
His boaſted expeditions ſhort to mine?—
To mine, how ſhort! on nature's Alps I ſtand,
And ſee a thouſand firmaments beneath!

A thouſand ſyſtems! as a thouſand grains!
So much a ſtranger, and ſo late arriv'd,
How can man's curious ſpirit not inquire,
What are the natives of this world ſublime,
Of this ſo foreign, un-terreſtrial ſphere,
Where mortal, untranſlated, never ſtray'd?

'O ye, as diſtant from my little home,
'As ſwifteſt ſun-beams in an age can fly!
'Far from my native element I roam,
'In queſt of new, and wonderful, to man.
'What province this, of His immenſe domain,
'Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
'Ye bord'rers on the coaſt of bliſs! what are you?
'A colony from heav'n? or, only rais'd,
'By frequent viſit from heav'n's neighbouring realms,
'To ſecondary gods, and half-divine?——
'Whate'er your nature, this is paſt diſpute,
'Far other life you live, far other tongue
'You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
'Than man. How various are the works of God!
'But ſay, what thought? is reaſon here inthron'd,
'And abſolute? or ſenſe in arms againſt her?
'Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd?
'Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
'And had your Eden an abſtemious Eve?
'Our Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree,
'And aſk their Adams—"Who would not be wife?"
'Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem'd?
'And if redeem'd——is your redeemer ſcorn'd?
'Is this your final reſidence? if not,
'Change you your ſcene, tranſlated? or by death?
'And if by death; what death?—know you diſeaſe?

' Or horrid war?——with war, this fatal hour,
' Europa groans (ſo call we a ſmall field,
' Where kings run mad) In our world, death deputes
' Intemperance to do the work of age;
' And, hanging up the quiver nature gave him,
' As ſlow of execution, for diſpatch
' Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them ſlay
' Their ſheep, (the ſilly ſheep they fleec'd before)
' And toſs him twice ten thouſand at a meal.
' Sit all your executioners on thrones?
' With you, can rage for plunder make a God?
' And bloodſhed waſh out every other ſtain?—
' But you, perhaps, can't bleed: From matter groſs
' Your ſpirits clean, are delicately clad
' In fine-ſpun aether; privileg'd to ſoar,
' Unloaded, uninfected; how unlike
' The lot of man! how few of human race
' By their own mud unmurder'd! how we wage
' Self-war eternal!—is your painful day
' Of hardy conflict o'er? or, are you ſtill
' Raw candidates at ſchool? and have you thoſe
' Who diſaffect reverſions, as with us?——
' But what are we? you never heard of man,
' Or earth; the bedlam of the univerſe!
' Where reaſon (undiſeas'd with you) runs mad,
' And nurſes folly's children as her own;
' Fond of the fouleſt. In the ſacred mount
' Of holineſs, where reaſon is pronounc'd
' Infallible; and thunders, like a god;
' Ev'n there, by ſaints, the daemons are outdone;
' What theſe think wrong, our ſaints refine to right;
' And kindly teach dull hell her own black arts;

'Satan, inſtructed, o'er their morals ſmiles.——
'But this, how ſtrange to you, who know not man!
'Has the leaſt rumour of our race arriv'd?
'Call'd here Elijah, in his flaming car?
'Paſs'd by you the good Enoch, on his road
'To thoſe fair fields, whence Lucifer was hurl'd;
'Who bruſh'd, perhaps, your ſphere, in his deſcent,
'Stain'd your pure cryſtal aether, or let fall
'A ſhort eclipſe from his portentous ſhade?
'O! that the fiend had lodg'd on ſome broad orb
'Athwart his way; nor reach'd his preſent home,
'Then blacken'd earth with footſteps foul'd in hell,
'Nor waſh'd in ocean, as from Rome he paſs'd
'To Britain's iſle; too, too, conſpicuous there!'
But this is all digreſſion: Where is He,
That o'er heav'n's battlements the felon hurl'd
To groans, and chains, and darkneſs? where is He,
Who ſees creation's ſummit in a vale?
He, whom, while man is man, he can't but ſeek;
And if he finds, commences more than man?
O for a teleſcope his throne to reach!
Tell me, ye learn'd on earth! or bleſt above!
Ye ſearching, ye Newtonian angels! tell,
Where your great Maſter's orb? his planets, where?
Thoſe conſcious ſatellites, thoſe morning-ſtars,
First-born of DEITY! from central love,
By veneration moſt profound, thrown off;
By ſweet attraction, no leſs ſtrongly drawn;
Aw'd, and yet raptur'd; ra tur'd, yet ſerene;
Paſt thought, illuſtrious, but with borrow'd beams;
In ſtill approaching circles, ſtill remote,
Revolving round the ſun's eternal Sire?

Or ſent, in lines direct, on embaſſies
To nations—in what latitude?—beyond
Terreſtrial thought's horizon!—and on what
High errands ſent?—here human effort ends;
And leaves me ſtill a ſtranger to his throne.
Full well it might! I quite miſtook my road.
Born in an age more curious, than devout;
More fond to fix the place of heav'n, or hell,
Than ſtudious this to ſhun, or that ſecure.
'Tis not the curious, but the pious path,
That leads me to my point: Lorenzo! know,
Without or ſtar, or angel, for their guide,
Who worſhip GOD, ſhall find him. Humble love,
And not proud reaſon, keeps the door of heav'n;
Love finds admiſſion, where proud ſcience fails.
Man's ſcience is the culture of his heart;
And not to loſe his plummet in the depths
Of nature, or the more profound of God.
Either to know, is an attempt that ſets
The wiſeſt on a level with the fool.
To fathom nature (ill-attempted here!)
Paſt doubt, is deep philoſophy above;
Higher degrees in bliſs archangels take,
As deeper learn'd; the deepeſt, learning ſtill.
For, what a thunder of Omnipotence
(So might I dare to ſpeak!) is ſeen in all!
In man! in earth! in more amazing ſkies!
Teaching this leſſon, pride is loth to learn—
'Not deeply to diſcern, not much to know,
'Mankind was born to wonder, and adore.'
And is there cauſe for higher wonder ſtill,
Than that which ſtruck us from our paſt ſurveys?

Yes; and for deeper adoration too.
From my late airy travel unconfin'd,
Have I learn'd nothing?—Yes, Lorenzo! this;
Each of theſe ſtars is a religious houſe;
I ſaw their altars ſmoke, their incenſe riſe,
And heard Hoſannas ring through every ſphere,
A ſeminary fraught with future gods.
Nature all o'er is conſecrated ground,
Teeming with growths immortal, and divine.
The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand,
Leaves nothing waſte; but ſows theſe fiery fields
With ſeeds of reaſon, which to virtues riſe
Beneath his genial ray; and, if eſcap'd
The peſtilential blaſts of ſtubborn will,
When grown mature, are gather'd for the ſkies.
And is devotion thought too much on earth,
When beings, ſo inperior, homage boaſt,
And triumph in proſtrations to the throne?
But wherefore more of planets, or of ſtars?
Æthereal journeys, and, diſcover'd there,
Ten-thouſand worlds, ten thouſand ways devout,
All nature ſending incenſe to the throne,
Except the bold Lorenzo's of our ſphere?
Op'ning the ſolemn ſources of my ſoul,
Since I have pour'd, like feign'd Eridanus,
My flowing numbers o'er the flaming ſkies,
Nor ſee, of fancy, or of fact, what more,
Invites the muſe—here turn we, and review
Our paſt nocturnal landſcape wide:—Then, ſay,
Say, then, Lorenzo! with what burſt of heart,
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
Muſt man exclaim, adoring, and aghaſt?

'O what a root! O what a branch is here!
'O what a father! what a family!
'Worlds! ſyſtems! and creations!—and creations,
'In one agglomerated cluſter, hung,
'†Great VINE, on THEE, on THEE the cluſter hangs;
'The filial cluſter! infinitely ſpread
'In glowing globes, with various being fraught:
'And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.
'Or, ſhall I ſay (for who can ſay enough?)
'A conſtellation of ten thouſand gems,
'(And, O! of what dimenſion! of what weight!)
'Set in one ſignet, flames on the right-hand
'Of Majeſty divine! the blazing ſeal,
'That deeply ſtamps on all created mind,
'Indelible, his ſov'reign attributes,
'Omnipotence, and love! that, paſſing bound;
'And this, ſurpaſſing that. Nor ſtop we here,
'For want of pow'r in GOD, but thought in man.
'Even this acknowledg'd, leaves us ſtill in debt;
'If greater aught, that greater all is thine.
'Dread SIRE!—accept this miniature of thee;
'And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
'In which archangels might have fail'd, unblam'd.'
How ſuch ideas of th'Almighty's pow'r,
And ſuch ideas of th' Almighty's plan,
(Ideas not abſurd) diſtend the thought
Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!
The fulneſs of the DEITY breaks forth
In inconceivables to men, and gods.
Think, then, O think; nor ever drop the thought;

† John xv. 1.

How low muſt man deſcend, when gods adore!—
Have I not, then, accompliſh'd my proud boaſt?
Did I not tell thee, '† We would mount, Lorenzo!
'And kindle our devotion at the ſtars?'
And have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?
And art all adamant? and do'ſt confute
All urg'd with one irrefragable ſmile?
Lorenzo! mirth, how miſerable here!
Swear by the ſtars, by HIM who made them, ſwear,
Thy heart, henceforth, ſhall be as pure as they:
Then thou, like them, ſhalt ſhine; like them, ſhalt riſe
From low to lofty; from obſcure to bright;
By due gradation, nature's ſacred law.
The ſtars, from whence?—aſk Chaos—he can tell.
Theſe bright temptations to idolatry,
From darkneſs, and confuſion, took their birth;
Sons of deformity! from fluid dregs
Tartarean, firſt they roſe to maſſes rude;
And then, to ſpheres opaque; then dimly ſhone;
Then brighten'd; then blaz'd out in perfect day.
Nature delights in progreſs; in advance
From worſe to better: But, when minds aſcend,
Progreſs, in part, depends upon themſelves.
Heav'n aids exertion; greater makes the great;
The voluntary little leſſens more.
O be a man! and thou ſhalt be a god!
And half ſelf-made!——ambition how divine!
O thou, ambitious of diſgrace alone!
Still undevout? unkindled?——tho' high-taught,

† Page 129.

School'd by the ſkies; and pupil of the ſtars;
Rank coward to the faſhionable world!
Art thou aſham'd to bend thy knee to heav'n?
Curs'd fume of pride, exhal'd from deepeſt hell!
Pride in religion is man's higheſt praiſe.
Bent on deſtruction! and in love with death!
Not all theſe luminaries, quench'd at once,
Were half ſo ſad, as one benighted mind,
Which gropes for happineſs, and meets deſpair.
How, like a widow in her weeds, the night,
Amid her glimm'ring tapers, ſilent ſits!
How ſorrowful, how deſolate, ſhe weeps
Perpetual dews, and ſaddens nature's ſcene!
A ſcene more ſad ſin makes the darken'd ſoul,
All comfort kills, nor leaves one ſpark alive.

Though blind of heart, ſtill open is thine eye:
Why ſuch magnificence in all thou ſeeſt?
Of matter's grandeur, know, one end is this,
To tell the rational, who gazes on it—
'Though that immenſely great, ſtill greater He
'Whoſe breaſt, capacious, can embrace, and lodge,
'Unburden'd, nature's univerſal ſcheme;
'Can graſp creation with a ſingle thought;
'Creation graſp; and not exclude its SIRE.'—
To tell him farther—'It behoves him much
'To guard th' important, yet depending, fate
'Of being, brighter than a thouſand ſuns;
'One ſingle ray of thought outſhines them all.'
And if man hears obedient, ſoon he'll ſoar
Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
His purple wing bedrop'd with eyes of gold,

Riſing, where thought is now deny'd to riſe,
Look down triumphant on theſe dazzling ſpheres.
Why then perſiſt ?—no mortal ever liv'd
But, dying, he pronounc'd (when words are true !)
The whole that charms thee, abſolutely vain ;
Vain, and far worſe !—think thou, with dying men ;
O condeſcend to think as angels think !
O tolerate a chance for happineſs !
Our nature ſuch, ill choice inſures ill fate ;
And hell had been, though there had been no God.
Do'ſt thou not know, my new aſtronomer !
Earth, turning from the ſun, brings night to man ?
Man, turning from his God, brings endleſs night :
Where thou can'ſt read no morals, find no friend,
Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
How deep the darkneſs ! and the groan how loud !
And far, how far, from lambent are the flames !
Such is Lorenzo's purchaſe ! ſuch his praiſe !
The proud, the politic, Lorenzo's praiſe !
Though, in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,
I've half read o'er the volume of the ſkies.
For think not thou haſt heard all this from me ;
My ſong but echoes what great nature ſpeaks :
What has ſhe ſpoken ?—thus the goddeſs ſpoke,
Thus ſpeaks for ever :—' Place, at nature's head,
' A ſov'reign, which o'er all things rolls his eye,
' Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,
' But, above all, diffuſes endleſs good ;
' To whom, for ſure redreſs, the wrong'd may fly ;
' The vile, for mercy ; and the pain'd, for peace ;
' By whom, the various tenants of theſe ſpheres,
' Diverſify'd in fortunes, place, and powers,

'Rais'd in enjoyment, as in worth they riſe,
'Arrive at length (if worthy ſuch approach)
'At that bleſs'd fountain-head, from which they ſtream;
'What conflict paſt redoubles preſent joy;
'And preſent joy looks forward on increaſe;
'And that, on more; no period! ev'ry ſtep
'A double boon! a promiſe, and a bliſs.'
How eaſy ſits this ſcheme on human hearts!
It ſuits their make; it ſooths their vaſt deſires;
Paſſion is pleas'd; and reaſon aſks no more;
'Tis rational! 'tis great!—but what is thine?
It darkens! ſhocks! excruciates! and confounds!
Leaves us quite naked, both of help and hope,
Sinking from bad to worſe; few years, the ſport
Of fortune; then, the morſel of deſpair.

Say, then, Lorenzo! (for thou know'ſt it well)
What's vice?—mere want of compaſs in our thought.
Religion, what?—the proof of common ſenſe;
How art thou whooted, where the leaſt prevails!
Is it my fault, if theſe truths call thee fool?
And thou ſhalt never be miſcall'd by me.
Can neither ſhame, nor terror, ſtand thy friend?
And art thou ſtill an inſect in the mire?
How, like thy guardian-angel, have I flown;
Snatch'd thee from earth; eſcorted thee through all
Th' aetherial armies; walk'd thee, like a god,
Through ſplendors of firſt magnitude, arrang'd
On either hand; clouds thrown beneath thy feet;
Cloſe-cruis'd on the bright paradiſe of GOD;
And almoſt introduc'd thee to the throne!
And art thou ſtill carouſing, for delight,

Rank poiſon; firſt, fermenting to mere froth,
And then ſubſiding into final gall?
To beings of ſublime, immortal make,
How ſhocking is all joy, whoſe end is ſure!
Such joy more ſhocking ſtill, the more it charms!
And do'ſt thou chuſe what ends, ere well-begun?
And infamous, as ſhort? and do'ſt thou chuſe
(Thou, to whoſe palate glory is ſo ſweet)
To wade into perdition, through contempt,
Not of poor bigots only, but thy own?
For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
And ſeen it bluſh beneath a boaſtful brow;
For, by ſtrong guilt's moſt violent aſſault,
Conſcience is but diſabled, not deſtroy'd.
O thou moſt awful being, and moſt vain!
Thy will how frail! how glorious is thy power!
Though dread eternity has ſown her ſeeds
Of bliſs, and woe, in thy deſpotic breaſt;
Though heav'n, and hell, depend upon thy choice;
A butterfly comes croſs, and both are fled.
Is this the picture of a rational?
This horrid image, ſhall it be moſt juſt?
Lorenzo! no: It cannot,—ſhall not be,
If there is force in reaſon; or, in ſounds
Chanted beneath the glimpſes of the moon,
A magic, at this planetary hour,
When ſlumber locks the gen'ral lip, and dreams
Through ſenſeleſs mazes hunt ſouls uninſpir'd.
Attend—the ſacred myſteries begin—
My ſolemn night-born adjuration hear;
Hear, and I'll raiſe thy ſpirit from the duſt;

While the ſtars gaze on this inchantment new;
Inchantment, not infernal, but divine!
'By ſilence, Death's peculiar attribute;
'By darkneſs, Guilt's inevitable doom;
'By darkneſs, and by ſilence, ſiſters dread!
'That draw the curtain round Night's ebon throne,
'And raiſe ideas, ſolemn as the ſcene!
'By NIGHT, and all of awful, night preſents
'To thought, or ſenſe (of awful much, to both,
'The goddeſs brings!) By theſe her trembling fires,
'Like Veſta's, ever-burning; and, like hers,
'Sacred to thoughts immaculate, and pure!
'By theſe bright orators, that prove, and praiſe,
'And preſs thee to revere the DEITY;
'Perhaps, too, aid thee, when rever'd a while,
'To reach his throne; as ſtages of the ſoul,
'Through which, at diff'rent periods, ſhe ſhall paſs,
'Refining gradual, for her final height,
'And purging off ſome droſs at ev'ry ſphere!
'By this dark pall thrown o'er the ſilent world!
'By the world's kings, and kingdoms, moſt renown'd,
'From ſhort ambition's zenith ſet for ever;
'Sad preſage to vain boaſters, now in bloom!
'By the long liſt of ſwift mortality,
'From Adam downward to this ev'ning knell,
'Which midnight waves in fancy's ſtartled eye;
'And ſhocks her with a hundred centuries,
'Round Death's black banner throng'd, in human thought!
'By thouſands, now, reſigning their laſt breath,
'And calling thee—wert thou ſo wiſe to hear!
'By tombs o'er tombs ariſing; human earth

'Ejected, to make room for—human earth;
'The monarch's terror! and the sexton's trade!
'By pompous obsequies, that shun the day,
'The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,
'Which makes poor man's humiliation proud;
'Boast of our ruin! triumph of our dust!
'By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones;
'And the pale lamp, that shews the ghastly dead,
'More ghastly, through the thick-incumbent gloom!
'By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,
'The gliding spectre! and the groaning grove!
'By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan
'For the grave's shelter! By desponding men,
'Senseless to pains of death, from pangs of guilt!
'By guilt's last audit! By yon moon in blood!
'The rocking firmament, the falling stars,
'And thunder's last discharge, great nature's knell!
'By second chaos; and eternal night'—
Be wise—nor let Philander blame my charm;
But own not ill-discharg'd my double debt,
Love to the living; duty to the dead.
For know, I'm but executor; he left
This moral legacy; I make it o'er
By his command; Philander hear in me;
And heav'n in both.—If deaf to these, Oh! hear,
Florello's tender voice; his weal depends
On thy resolve; it trembles at thy choice;
For his sake—love thyself: Example strikes
All human hearts; a bad example more;
More still, a father's; that insures his ruin.
As parent of his being, would'st thou prove
Th' unnat'ral parent of his miseries,

And make him curſe the being which thou gav'ſt?
Is this the bleſſing of ſo fond a father?
If careleſs of Lorenzo! ſpare, Oh! ſpare,
Florello's father, and Philander's friend;
Florello's father ruin'd, ruins him;
And from Philander's friend the world expects
A conduct, no diſhonour to the dead.
Let paſſion do, what nobler motive ſhould;
Let love, and emulation, riſe in aid
To reaſon; and perſuade thee to be—bleſt.
This ſeems not a requeſt to be deny'd;
Yet (ſuch th' infatuation of mankind!)
'Tis the moſt hopeleſs man can make to man.
Shall I, then, riſe in argument, and warmth;
And urge Philander's poſthumous advice,
From topics yet unbroach'd?—
But Oh! I faint! my ſpirits fail!—nor ſtrange;
So long on wing, and in no middle clime;
To which my great Creator's glory call'd;
And calls—but, now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand
Has ſtroak'd my drooping lids, and promiſes
My long arrear of reſt; the downy god
(Wont to return with our returning peace)
Will pay, ere long, and bliſs me with repoſe.
Haſte, haſte, ſweet ſtranger! from the peaſant's cot,
Thy ſhip-boy's hammock, or the ſoldier's ſtraw,
Whence ſorrow never chas'd thee; with thee bring,
Not hideous viſions, as of late; but draughts
Delicious of well-taſted, cordial, reſt;
Man's rich reſtorative; his balmy bath,
That ſupples, lubricates, and keeps in play,
The various movements of this nice machine,

Which aſks ſuch frequent periods of repair.
When tir'd with vain rotations of the day,
Sleep winds us up for the ſucceeding dawn;
Freſh we ſpin on, till ſickneſs clogs our wheels,
Or death quite breaks the ſpring, and motion ends.
When will it end with me?

——'THOU only know'ſt,
'Thou, whoſe broad eye the future, and the paſt,
'Joins to the preſent; making one of three
'To mortal thought: Thou know'ſt, and thou alone,
'All-knowing!—all-unknown!—and yet well-known!
'Near, though remote! and, though unfathom'd, felt!
'And, though inviſible, for ever ſeen!
'And ſeen in all! the great, and the minute;
'Each globe above, with its gigantic race,
'Each flow'r, each leaf, with its ſmall people ſwarm'd,
'(Thoſe puny vouchers for Omnipotence!)
'To the firſt thought, that aſks, 'From whence?'
declare
'Their common ſource. Thou fountain running o'er
'In rivers of communicated joy!
'Who gav'ſt us ſpeech for far, far humbler themes!
'Say, by what name ſhall I preſume to call
'Him I ſee burning in theſe countleſs ſuns,
'As Moſes, in the buſh? Illuſtrious Mind!
'The whole creation, leſs, far leſs, to Thee,
'Than that, to the creation's ample round.
'How ſhall I name Thee?—how my lab'ring ſoul
'Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!
'Great ſyſtem of perfections! mighty cauſe
'Of cauſes mighty! cauſe uncaus'd! ſole root

'Of nature, that luxuriant growth of God!
'First father of effects! that progeny
'Of endless series; where the golden chain's
'Last link admits a period, who can tell?
'Father of all that is or heard, or hears!
'Father of all that is or seen, or sees!
'Father of all that is, or shall arise!
'Father of this immeasurable mass
'Of matter multiform; or dense, or rare;
'Opaque, or lucid; rapid, or at rest;
'Minute, or passing bound! in each extreme
'Of like amaze, and mystery, to man.
'Father of these bright millions of the night!
'Of which the least full Godhead had proclaim'd,
'And thrown the gazer on his knee—or, say,
'Is appellation higher still, thy choice?
'Father of matter's temporary lords!
'Father of spirits! nobler offspring! sparks
'Of high paternal glory; rich-endow'd
'With various measures, and with various modes
'Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams
'More pale, or bright from day divine, to break
'The dark of matter, organiz'd (the ware
'Of all created spirit); beams, that rise
'Each over other in superior light,
'Till the last ripens into lustre strong,
'Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond
'(Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)
'Of intellectual beings! beings bless'd
'With pow'rs to please Thee; not of passive ply
'To laws they know not; beings lodg'd in seats
'Of well-adapted joys; in diff'rent domes

'Of this imperial palace for thy ſons;
'Of this proud, populous, well-policy'd,
'Tho' boundleſs habitation, plann'd by Thee;
'Whoſe ſeveral clans their ſeveral climates ſuit;
'And tranſpoſition, doubtleſs, would deſtroy.
'Or, Oh! indulge, immortal King! indulge
'A title, leſs auguſt indeed, but more
'Endearing; ah! how ſweet in human ears!
'Sweet in our ears! and triumph in our hearts!
'Father of Immortality to Man!
'A theme that * lately ſet my ſoul on fire.—
'And Thou the next! yet equal! Thou, by whom
'That bleſſing was convey'd; far more! was bought;
'Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds
'Were made; and one, redeem'd! illuſtrious light
'From light illuſtrious! Thou, whoſe regal power,
'Finite in time, but infinite in ſpace,
'On more than adamantine baſis fix'd,
'O'er more, far more, than diadems and thrones,
'Inviolably reigns; the dread of gods!
'And Oh! the friend of man! beneath whoſe foot,
'And by the mandate of whoſe awful nod,
'All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
'Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll
'Through the ſhort channels of expiring time,
'Or ſhoreleſs ocean of eternity,
'Calm, or tempeſtuous (as the ſpirit breathes)
'In abſolute ſubjection!—and, O Thou
'The glorious Third! diſtinct, not ſeparate!
'Beaming from both! with both incorporate!

* Nights the Sixth and Seventh.

'And (ſtrange to tell!) incorporate with duſt!
'By condeſcenſion, as thy glory, great,
'Enſhrin'd in man! of human hearts, if pure,
'Divine inhabitant! the tie divine
'Of heav'n with diſtant earth! by whom, I truſt,
'(If not inſpir'd) uncenſur'd this addreſs
'To thee, to them—to whom?—myſterious power!
'Reveal'd—yet unreveal'd! darkneſs in light!
'Number in unity! our joy! our dread!
'The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin!
'That animates all right, the triple ſun!
'Sun of the ſoul! her never-ſetting ſun!
'Triune, unutterable, unconceiv'd,
'Abſconding, yet demonſtrable, Great God!
'Greater than greateſt! better than the beſt!
'Kinder than kindeſt! with ſoft pity's eye,
'Or (ſtronger ſtill to ſpeak it) with thine own,
'From thy bright home, from that high firmament,
'Where thou, from all eternity, haſt dwelt;
'Beyond arch-angels unaſſiſted ken;
'From far above what mortals higheſt call;
'From elevation's pinacle; look down,
'Thro' what? confounding interval! thro' all,
'And more, than lab'ring fancy can conceive;
'Through radiant ranks of eſſences unknown;
'Through hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd
'Round various banners of Omnipotence,
'With endleſs change of rapt'rous duties fir'd;
'Through wond'rous beings interpoſing ſwarms,
'All cluſt'ring at the call, to dwell in Thee;
'Through this wide waſte of worlds; this viſto vaſt,
'All ſanded o'er with ſuns; ſuns turn'd to night

'Before thy feebleſt beam—look down—down—down,
'On a poor breathing particle in duſt,
'Or, lower,—an immortal in his crimes.
'His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues, too!
'Thoſe ſmaller faults; half-converts to the right.
'Nor let me cloſe theſe eyes, which never more
'May ſee the ſun, (tho' night's deſcending ſcale
'Now weighs up morn) unpity'd, and unbleſt!
'In thy diſpleaſure dwells eternal pain;
'Pain, our averſion; pain, which ſtrikes me now;
'And, ſince all pain is terrible to man,
'Tho' tranſient, terrible; at thy good hour,
'Gently, ah gently, lay me in my bed,
'My clay-cold bed! by nature, now, ſo near;
'By nature, near; ſtill nearer by diſeaſe!
'Till then, be this an emblem of my grave:
'Let it out-preach the preacher; ev'ry night
'Let it out-cry the boy at Philip's ear;
'That tongue of death; that herald of the tomb!
'And when (the ſhelter of thy wing implor'd)
'My ſenſes, ſooth'd, ſhall ſink in ſoft repoſe;
'O ſink this truth ſtill deeper in my ſoul,
'Suggeſted by my pillow, ſign'd by fate,
'Firſt in fate's volume, at the page of man—
'Man's ſickly ſoul, tho' turn'd and toſs'd for ever,
'From ſide to ſide, can reſt on nought but Thee;
'Here, in full truſt; hereafter, in full joy.
'On Thee, the promis'd, ſure, eternal down
'Of ſpirits, toil'd in travel thro' this vale.
'Nor of that pillow ſhall my ſoul deſpond;
'For—love Almighty! love Almighty! (ſing,
'Exult, creation!) love Almighty, reigns!

'That death of death! that cordial of deſpair!
'And loud Eternity's triumphant ſong!
'Of whom no more:—For, O thou Patron-god!
'Thou god, and mortal! thence more God to man!
'Man's theme eternal! man's eternal theme!
'Thou canſt not 'ſcape uninjur'd from our praiſe.
'Uninjur'd from our praiſe can He eſcape,
'Who, diſemboſom'd from the Father, bows
'The heav'n of heav'ns, to kiſs the diſtant earth!
'Breathes out in agonies a ſinleſs ſoul!
'Againſt the croſs, death's iron ſceptre breaks!
'From famiſh'd ruin plucks her human prey!
'Throws wide the gates celeſtial to his foes!
'Their gratitude, for ſuch a boundleſs debt,
'Deputes their ſuff'ring brothers to receive!
'And, if deep human guilt in payment fails;
'As deeper guilt prohibits our deſpair!
'Enjoins it, as our duty, to rejoice!
'And, (to cloſe all) omnipotently kind,
'* Takes his delight among the ſons of men.

What words are theſe!—and did they come from heav'n!
And were they ſpoke to man! to guilty man!
What are all myſteries to love like this!
The ſong of angels, all the melodies
Of choral gods, are wafted in the ſound;
Heal and exhilarate the broken heart,
Tho' plung'd, before, in horrors dark as night:
Rich prelibation of conſummate joy!
Nor wait we diſſolution to be bleſt.

* Prov. chap. viii.

This final effort of the moral muſe,
How juſtly * titled! nor for me alone;
For all that read; what ſpirit of ſupport,
What heights of CONSOLATION crown my ſong?
Then, farewel NIGHT! of darkneſs, now, no more:
Joy breaks, ſhines, triumphs; 'tis eternal day.
Shall that which riſes out of nought complain
Of a few evils, paid with endleſs joys?
My ſoul! henceforth, in ſweeteſt union join
The two ſupports of human happineſs,
Which ſome, erroneous, think can never meet;
True taſte of life, and conſtant thought of death;
The thought of death, ſole victor of its dread!
Hope be thy joy; and probity thy ſkill;
Thy patron, He, whoſe diadem has dropp'd
Yon gems of heav'n; Eternity, thy prize:
And leave the racers of the world their own,
Their feather, and their froth, for endleſs toils:
They part with all for that which is not bread;
They mortify, they ſtarve, on wealth, fame, power;
And laugh to ſcorn the fools that aim at more.
How muſt a ſpirit, late eſcap'd from earth,
Suppoſe Philander's, Lucia's, or Narciſſa's,
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
Look back, aſtoniſh'd, on the ways of men,
Whoſe lives whole drift is to forget their graves!
And when our preſent privilege is paſt,
To ſcourge us with due ſenſe of its abuſe,
The ſame aſtoniſhment will ſeize us all.
What then muſt pain us, would preſerve us now.

* The Conſolation.

Lorenzo! 'tis not yet too late; Lorenzo!
Seize wiſdom, ere 'tis torment to be wiſe;
That is, ſeize wiſdom, ere ſhe ſeizes thee.
For, what, my ſmall philoſopher! is hell?
'Tis nothing, but full knowledge of the truth,
When truth, reſiſted long, is ſworn our foe;
And calls Eternity to do her right.
Thus, darkneſs aiding intellectual light,
And ſacred ſilence whiſp'ring truths divine,
And truths divine converting pain to peace,
My ſong the midnight raven has outwing'd,
And ſhot, ambitious of unbounded ſcenes,
Beyond the flaming limits of the world,
Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
Of fancy, when our hearts remain below?
Virtue abounds in flatterers, and foes;
'Tis pride, to praiſe her; penance, to perform.
To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
Lorenzo! riſe, at this auſpicious hour;
An hour, when heav'n's moſt intimate with man;
When, like a falling ſtar, the ray divine
Glides ſwift into the boſom of the juſt;
And juſt are all, determin'd to reclaim;
Which ſets that title high, within thy reach.
Awake, then: Thy Philander calls: Awake!
Thou, who ſhalt wake, when the creation ſleeps;
When, like a taper, all theſe ſuns expire;
When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,
Plucking the pillars that ſupport the world,
In Nature's ample ruins lies entomb'd;
And Midnight, univerſal Midnight! reigns.

END OF THE NIGHT THOUGHTS.

A

PARAPHRASE

ON

Part of the Book of JOB.

THRICE happy Job long-liv'd in regal ſtate,
Nor ſaw the ſumptuous Eaſt a prince ſo great;
Whoſe worldly ſtores in ſuch abundance flow'd,
Whoſe heart with ſuch exalted virtue glow'd.
At length mi-fortunes take their turn to reign,
And ills on ills ſucceed, a dreadful train!
What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,
The ſword wide-waſting, the reproachful tongue,
And ſpotted plagues, that mark'd his limbs all o'er
So thick with pains, they wanted room for more?
A change ſo ſad what mortal heart could bear?
Exhauſted woe had left him nought to fear,
But gave him all to grief: Low earth he preſt,
Wept in the duſt, and ſorely ſmote his breaſt.
His friends around the deep affliction mourn'd,
Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan return'd;

In anguiſh of their hearts their mantles rent,
And ſeven long days in ſolemn ſilence ſpent;
A debt of rev'rence to diſtreſs ſo great!
Then Job contain'd no more, but curs'd his fate:
His day of birth, its inauſpicious light
He wiſhes ſunk in ſhades of endleſs night,
And blotted from the year; nor fears to crave
Death, inſtant death, impatient for the grave;
That ſeat of peace, that manſion of repoſe,
Where reſt and mortals are no longer foes;
Where counſellors are huſh'd, and mighty kings,
O happy turn! no more are wretched things.
His words were daring, and diſpleas'd his friends;
His conduct they reprove, and he defends;
And now they kindled into warm debate,
And ſentiments oppos'd with equal heat;
Fix'd in opinion, both refuſe to yield,
And ſummon all their reaſon to the field.
So high at length their arguments were wrought,
They reach'd the laſt extent of human thought;
A pauſe enſu'd. When lo! heav'n interpos'd,
And awfully the long contention clos'd.
Full o'er their heads, with terrible ſurpriſe,
A ſudden whirlwind blacken'd all the ſkies;
(They ſaw, and trembled!) from the darkneſs broke
A dreadful voice, and thus th' Almighty ſpoke:
Who gives his tongue a looſe ſo bold and vain,
Cenſures my conduct, and reproves my reign?
Lifts up his thought againſt me from the duſt,
And tells the world's Creator what is juſt?
Of late ſo brave, now lift a dauntleſs eye,
Face my demand, and give it a reply.

Where didſt thou dwell at nature's early birth ?
Who laid foundations for the ſpacious earth ?
Who on its ſurface did extend the line,
Its form determine, and its bulk confine ?
Who fix'd the corner-ſtone ? what hand, declare,
Hung it on nought, and faſten'd it in air ;
When the bright morning ſtars in concert ſung,
When heav'n's high arch with loud Hoſanna's rung;
When ſhouting ſons of God the triumph crown'd,
And the wide concave thunder'd with the ſound ?
Earth's num'rous kingdoms, haſt thou view'd them all ?
And can thy ſpan of knowledge graſp the ball ?
Who heav'd the mountain, which ſublimely ſtands,
And caſts its ſhadow into diſtant lands ?
Who, ſtretching forth his ſceptre o'er the deep,
Can that wild world in due ſubjection keep ?
I broke the globe, I ſcoop'd its hollow'd ſide,
And did a baſon for the floods provide ;
I chain them, with my word ; the boiling ſea,
Work'd up in tempeſts, hears my great decree ;
' Thus far, thy floating tide ſhall be convey'd ;
' And here, O main, be thy proud billows ſtay'd.'
Haſt thou explor'd the ſecrets of the deep,
Where, ſhut from uſe, unnumber'd treaſures ſleep ;
Where, down a thouſand fathoms from the day,
Springs the great fountain, mother of the ſea ?
Thoſe gloomy paths did thy bold foot e'er tread,
Whole worlds of waters rolling o'er thy head ?
Hath the cleft centre open'd wide to thee ?
Death's inmoſt chambers didſt thou ever ſee ?
E'er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade
To the black portal thro' th' incumbent ſhade ?

Deep are thoſe ſhades; but ſhades ſtill deeper hide
My counſels from the ken of human pride.
Where dwells the light? in what refulgent dome?
And where has darkneſs made her diſmal home?
Thou know'ſt, no doubt, ſince thy large heart is fraught
With ripen'd wiſdom thro' long ages brought;
Since nature was call'd forth when thou waſt by,
And into being roſe beneath thine eye!
Are miſts begotten? who their father knew?
From whom deſcend the pearly drops of dew?
To bind the ſtream by night, what hand can boaſt,
Or whiten morning, with the hoary froſt?
Whoſe pow'rful breath, from northern regions blown,
Touches the ſea, and turns it into ſtone?
A ſudden deſart ſpreads o'er realms defac'd,
And lays one half of the creation waſte?
Thou know'ſt me not; thy blindneſs cannot ſee
How vaſt a diſtance parts thy God from thee.
Canſt thou in whirlwinds mount aloft? canſt thou
In clouds and darkneſs wrap thy awful brow?
And when day triumphs in meridian light,
Put forth thy hand, and ſhade the world with night?
Who launch'd the clouds in air, and bid them roll
Suſpended ſeas aloft, from pole to pole?
Who can refreſh the burning ſandy plain,
And quench the ſummer with a waſte of rain?
Who in rough deſarts, far from human toil,
Made rocks bring forth, and deſolation ſmile?
There blooms the roſe, where human face ne'er ſhone,
And ſpreads its beauties to the ſun alone.

To check the ſhow'r, who lifts his hand on high,
And ſhuts the ſluices of th' exhauſted ſky;
When earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,
Her naked mountains, and her ruſſet plains;
But, new in life, a chearful proſpect yields
Of ſhining rivers, and of verdant fields;
When groves and foreſts laviſh all their bloom,
And earth and heav'n are fill'd with rich perfume?

Haſt thou e'er ſcal'd my wint'ry ſkies, and ſeen
Of hail and ſnows my northern magazine?
Theſe the dread treaſures of mine anger are,
My fund of vengeance for the day of war,
When clouds rain death, and ſtorms, at my command,
Rage thro' the world, or waſte a guilty land.

Who taught the rapid winds to fly ſo faſt,
Or ſhakes the centre with his eaſtern blaſt?
Who from the ſkies can a whole deluge pour?
Who ſtrikes thro' nature with the ſolemn roar
Of dreadful thunder, points it where to fall,
And in fierce lightning wraps the flying ball?
Not he who trembles at the darted fires,
Falls at the ſound, and in the flaſh expires.

Who drew the comet out to ſuch a ſize,
And pour'd his flaming train o'er half the ſkies?
Did thy reſentment hang him out? does he
Glare on the nations, and denounce, from thee?

Who on low earth can moderate the rein,
That guides the ſtars along th' ethereal plain?
Appoint their ſeaſons, and direct their courſe,
Their luſtre brighten, and ſupply their force?
Canſt thou the ſkies benevolence reſtrain,
And cauſe the Pleiades to ſhine in vain?

Or, when Orion ſparkles from his ſphere,
Thaw the cold ſeaſon, and unbind the year ?
Bid Mazzaroth his deſtin'd ſtation know,
And teach the bright Arcturus, where to glow ?
Mine is the night, with all her ſtars; I pour
Myriads, and myriads I reſerve in ſtore.
Doſt thou pronounce where day-light ſhall be born,
And draw the purple curtain of the morn;
Awake the ſun, and bid him come away,
And glad thy world with his obſequious ray ?
Haſt thou inthron'd in flaming glory, driv'n
Triumphant round the ſpacious ring of heav'n ?
That pomp of light, what hand ſo far diſplays,
That diſtant earth lies baſking in the blaze ?
Who did the ſoul with her rich pow'rs inveſt,
And light up reaſon in the human breaſt ?
To ſhine, with freſh increaſe of luſtre, bright,
When ſtars and ſuns are ſet in endleſs night ?
To theſe my various queſtions make reply.
Th' Almighty ſpoke; and, ſpeaking, ſhook the ſky.
What then, Chaldaean ſire, was thy ſurprize!
Thus thou, with trembling heart, and down-caſt eyes:
'Once and again, which I in groans deplore,
'My tongue has err'd; but ſhall preſume no more.
'My voice is in eternal ſilence bound,
'And all my ſoul falls proſtrate to the ground.'
He ceas'd: When, lo! again th' Almighty ſpoke;
The ſame dread voice from the black whirlwind broke.
Can that arm meaſure with an arm divine ?
And canſt thou thunder with a voice like mine ?
Or in the hollow of thy hand contain
The bulk of waters, the wide-ſpreading main,

When, mad with tempeſts, all the billows riſe
In all their rage, and daſh the diſtant ſkies?
Come forth, in beauty's excellence array'd;
And be the grandeur of thy pow'r diſplay'd;
Put on omnipotence, and frowning make
The ſpacious round of the creation ſhake;
Diſpatch thy vengeance, bid it overthrow
Triumphant vice, lay lofty tyrants low,
And crumble them to duſt. When this is done,
I grant thy ſafety lodg'd in thee alone;
Of thee thou art, and may'ſt undaunted ſtand,
Behind the buckler of thine own right hand.
Fond man! the viſion of a moment made!
Dream of a dream! and ſhadow of a ſhade!
What worlds haſt thou produc'd, what creatures fram'd,
What inſects cheriſh'd, that thy God is blam'd?
When, pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood
Calls upon God, importunate for food,
Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarſe requeſt,
And ſtills the clamour of the craving neſt?
Who in the cruel oſtrich has ſubdu'd
A parent's care, and fond inquietude?
While far ſhe flies, her ſcatter'd eggs are found,
Without an owner, on the ſandy ground;
Caſt out on fortune, they at mercy lie,
And borrow life from an indulgent ſky;
Adopted by the ſun, in blaze of day,
They ripen under his prolific ray.
Unmindful ſhe, that ſome unhappy tread
May cruſh her young in their neglected bed.

What time ſhe ſkims along the field with ſpeed,
She ſcorns the rider, and purſuing ſteed.
How rich the peacock! what bright glories run
From plume to plume, and vary in the ſun!
He proudly ſpreads them to the golden ray,
Gives all his colours, and adorns the day;
With conſcious ſtate the ſpacious round diſplays,
And ſlowly moves amid the waving blaze.
Who taught the hawk to find, in ſeaſons wiſe,
Perpetual ſummer. and a change of ſkies?
When clouds deform the year, ſhe mounts the wind,
Shoots to the ſouth, nor fears the ſtorm behind;
The ſun returning, ſhe returns agen,
Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.
Tho' ſtrong the hawk, tho' practis'd well to fly,
An eagle drops her in a lower ſky;
An eagle, when, deſerting human ſight,
She ſeeks the ſun in her unweary'd flight,
Did thy command her yellow pinion lift
So high in air, and ſeat her on the clift,
Where far above thy world ſhe dwells alone,
And proudly makes the ſtrength of rocks her own;
Thence, wide o'er nature takes her dread ſurvey,
And with a glance predeſtinates her prey?
She feaſts her young with blood, and, hov'ring o'er
Th' unſlaughter'd hoſt, enjoys the promis'd gore.
Know'ſt thou how many moons, by me aſſign'd,
Roll o'er the mountain goat, and foreſt hind,
While pregnant they a mother's load ſuſtain?
They bend in anguiſh, and caſt forth their pain.
Hale are their young, from human frailties freed;
Walk unſuſtain'd, and unaſſiſted feed;

They live at once; forſake the dam's warm ſide;
Take the wide world, with nature for their guide;
Bound o'er the lawn, or ſeek the diſtant glade;
And find a home in each delightful ſhade.

Will the tall *reem*, which knows no lord but me,
Low at thy crib, and aſk an alms of thee?
Submit his unworn ſhoulder to the yoke,
Break the ſtiff clod, and o'er thy furrow ſmoke?
Since great his ſtrength, go truſt him, void of care;
Lay on his neck the toil of all the year;
Bid him bring home the ſeaſons to thy doors,
And caſt his load among thy gather'd ſtores.

Didſt thou from ſervice the wild-aſs diſcharge,
And break his bonds, and bid him live at large,
Thro' the wide waſte, his ample manſion, roam,
And loſe himſelf in his unbounded home?
By nature's hand magnificently fed,
His meal is on the range of mountains ſpread;
As in pure air aloft he bounds along,
He ſees in diſtant ſmoke the city throng;
Conſcious of freedom, ſcorns the ſmother'd train,
The threat'ning driver, and the ſervile rein.

Survey the warlike horſe! didſt thou inveſt
With thunder, his robuſt diſtended cheſt?
No ſenſe of fear his dauntleſs ſoul allays;
'Tis dreadful to behold his noſtrils blaze;
To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,
And triumphs in the fulneſs of his might;
High-rais'd he ſnuffs the battle from afar,
And burns to plunge amid the raging war;
And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,
And in a ſtorm of fury ſhakes the ground.

How does his firm, his rising heart, advance
Full on the brandish'd sword, and shaken lance;
While his fix'd eye-balls meet the dazling shield.
Gaze, and return the lightning of the field!
He sinks the sense of pain in gen'rous pride,
Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side;
But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast
Till death; and when he groans, he groans his last.
But, fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,
Grimly majestic in his lonely walks;
When round he glares, all living creatures fly;
He clears the desart with his rolling eye.
Say, mortal, does he rouse at thy command,
And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand?
Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,
And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,
Where bent on death lie hid his tawny brood,
And, couch'd in dreadful ambush, pant for blood;
Or, stretch'd on broken limbs, consume the day,
In darkness wrapt, and slumber o'er their prey?
By the pale moon they take their destin'd round,
And lash their sides, and furious tear the ground.
Now shrieks, and dying groans, the desart fill;
They rage, they rend, their rav'nous jaws distil
With crimson foam; and, when the banquet's o'er,
They stride away, and paint their steps with gore;
In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust,
And shudders at the talon in the dust.
Mild is my Behemoth, tho' large his frame;
Smooth is his temper, and repress his flame,
While unprovok'd. This native of the flood
Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food;

Earth ſinks beneath him, as he moves along
To ſeek the herbs, and mingle with the throng.
See, with what ſtrength his harden'd loins are bound,
All over proof, and ſhut againſt a wound.
How like a mountain cedar moves his tail!
Nor can his complicated ſinews fail.
Built high and wide, his ſolid bones ſurpaſs
The bars of ſteel; his ribs are ribs of braſs;
His port majeſtic, and his armed jaw,
Give the wide foreſt, and the mountain, law.
The mountains feed him; there the beaſts admire
The mighty ſtranger, and in dread retire:
At length his greatneſs, nearer they ſurvey,
Graze in his ſhadow, and his eye obey.
The fens and marſhes are his cool retreat,
His noon-tide ſhelter from the burning heat;
Their ſedgy boſoms his wide couch are made,
And groves of willows give him all their ſhade.
His eye drinks Jordan up, when, fir'd with drought,
He truſts to turn its current down his throat;
In leſſen'd waves it creeps along the plain:
He ſinks a river, and he thirſts again.

Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful ſide,
Caſt forth thy line into the ſwelling tide:
With ſlender hair Leviathan command,
And ſtretch his vaſtneſs on the loaded ſtrand.
Will he become thy ſervant? will he own
Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown?
Or with his ſport amuſe thy leiſure day,
And, bound in ſilk, with thy ſoft maidens play?
Shall pompous banquets ſwell with ſuch a prize?
And the bowl journey round his ample ſize?

Or the debating merchants ſhare the prey,
And various limbs to various marts convey?
Thro' his firm ſkull what ſteel its way can win?
What forceful engine can ſubdue his ſkin?
Fly far, and live; tempt not his matchleſs might;
The braveſt ſhrink to cowards in his ſight;
The raſheſt dare not rouſe him up: Who then
Shall turn on me, among the ſons of men?
  Am I a debtor? haſt thou ever heard
Whence come the gifts which are on me conferr'd?
My laviſh fruit a thouſand valleys fills,
And mine the herds, that graze a thouſand hills:
Earth, ſea, and air, all nature is my own;
And ſtars and ſuns are duſt beneath my throne.
And dar'ſt thou with the world's great father vie,
Thou, who doſt tremble at my creature's eye?
  At full my large Leviathan ſhall riſe,
Boaſt all his ſtrength, and ſpread his wond'rous ſize.
Who, great in arms, e'er ſtripp'd his ſhining mail,
Or crown'd his triumph with a ſingle ſcale?
Whoſe heart ſuſtains him to draw near? behold,
Deſtruction yawns; his ſpacious jaws unfold,
And, marſhal'd round the wide expanſe, diſcloſe
Teeth edg'd with death, and crouding rows on rows:
What hideous fangs on either ſide ariſe!
And what a deep abyſs between them lies!
Mete with thy lance, and with thy plummet ſound,
The one how long, the other how profound.
  His bulk is charg'd with ſuch a furious ſoul,
That clouds of ſmoke from his ſpread noſtrils roll,
As from a furnace; and, when rous'd his ire,
Fate iſſues from his jaws in ſtreams of fire.

The rage of tempeſts, and the roar of ſeas,
Thy terror, this thy great ſuperior pleaſe;
Strength on his ample ſhoulder ſits in ſtate;
His well-join'd limbs are dreadfully complete;
His flakes of ſolid fleſh are ſlow to part;
As ſteel his nerves, as adamant his heart.

When, late-awak'd, he rears him from the floods,
And, ſtretching forth his ſtature to the clouds,
Writhes in the ſun aloft his ſcaly height,
And ſtrikes the diſtant hills with tranſient light,
Far round are fatal damps of terror ſpread,
The mighty fear, nor bluſh to own their dread.

Large is his front; and, when his burniſh'd eyes
Lift their broad lids, the morning ſeems to riſe.

In vain may death in various ſhapes invade,
The ſwift-wing'd arrow, the deſcending blade;
His naked breaſt their impotence defies,
The dart rebounds, the brittle faulchion flies:
Shut in himſelf the war without he hears,
Safe in the tempeſt of their ratt'ling ſpears;
The cumber'd ſtrand their waſted vollies ſtrow;
His ſport, the rage and labour of the foe.

His paſtimes, like a caldron, boil the flood,
And blacken ocean with the riſing mud;
The billows feel him as he works his way;
His hoary footſteps ſhine along the ſea;
The foam high-wrought with white divides the green,
And diſtant ſailors point where death has been.

His like earth bears not on her ſpacious face,
Alone in nature ſtands his dauntleſs race,
For utter ignorance of fear renown'd;
In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around,

Makes every ſwoln diſdainful heart ſubſide;
And holds dominion o'er the ſons of pride.

Then the Chaldean eas'd his lab'ring breaſt,
With full conviction of his crime oppreſt.

'Thou can'ſt accompliſh all things, Lord of might!
'And every thought is naked to thy ſight:
'But oh! thy ways are wonderful, and lie
'Beyond the deepeſt reach of mortal eye.
'Oft have I heard of thine almighty pow'r,
'But never ſaw thee till this dreadful hour.
'O'erwhelm'd with ſhame, the Lord of life I ſee,
'Abhor myſelf, and give my ſoul to thee:
'Nor ſhall my weakneſs tempt thine anger more:
'Man was not made to queſtion, but adore.

NOTES.

IT is disputed among the critics who was the author of the book of Job. Some give it to Moses; some to others. As I was engaged in this little performance, some arguments occurred to me, which favour the former of these opinions; which arguments I have flung into the following notes, where little else is to be expected.

Page 187. *Thrice happy Job*, &c.] The Almighty's speech, chap. xxxviii. &c. which is what I paraphrase in this little work, is by much the finest part of the noblest and most ancient poem in the world. Bishop Patrick says, its grandeur is as much above all other poetry, as thunder is louder than a whisper. In order to set this distinguished part of the poem in a fuller light, and give the reader a clearer conception of it, I have abridged the preceding and subsequent parts of the poem, and joined them to it; so that this piece is a sort of an epitome of the whole book of Job.

I use the word *paraphrase*, because I want another which might better answer to the uncommon liberties I have taken. I have omitted, added, and transposed. The mountain, the comet, the sun, and other parts, are entirely added: The peacock, the lion, &c. are much enlarged: And I have thrown the whole into a method more suitable to our notions of regularity. The judicious, if they compare this piece with the original, will, I flatter myself, find the reasons for the great liberties I have indulged myself in through the whole.

Longinus has a chapter on interrogations, which ſhews that they contribute much to the ſublime. This ſpeech of the Almighty is made up of them. Interrogation ſeems indeed the proper ſtyle of Majeſty incenſed. It differs from other manner of reproof, as bidding a perſon execute himſelf, does from a common execution; for he that aſks the guilty a proper queſtion, makes him, in effect, paſs ſentence on himſelf.

Page 188. ——*From the darkneſs broke*
A dreadful voice, and thus th' Almighty ſpoke.]

The book of Job is well known to be dramatic, and, like the tragedies of old Greece, is fiction built on truth. Probably this moſt noble part of it, the Almighty ſpeaking out of the whirlwind, (ſo ſuitable to the after-practice of the Greek ſtage, when there happened *Dignus vindice nodus*), is fictitious; but it is a fiction more agreeable to the time in which Job lived, than to any ſince. Frequent, before the law, were the appearances of the Almighty after this manner, Exodus, chap. xix. Ezekiel, chap. i. &c. Hence is he ſaid to 'dwell in thick darkneſs; and have his way in the whirlwind.'

Page 189. *Thus far thy floating tide*, &c.] There is a very great air in all that precedes; but this is ſingularly ſublime. We are ſtruck with admiration, to ſee the vaſt and ungovernable ocean receiving commands, and punctually obeying them; to find it, like a managed horſe, raging, toſſing, and foaming, but by the rule and direction of its maſter. This paſſage yields in ſublimity to that of, 'Let there be light,' &c.

ſo much only, as the abſolute government of nature yields to the creation of it.

The like ſpirit in theſe two paſſages is no bad concurrent argument, that Moſes is author of the book of Job.

Page 193. *When, pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood*, &c.] Another argument that Moſes was the author, is, that moſt of the creatures here mentioned are Egyptian. The reaſon given why the raven is particularly mentioned as an object of the care of Providence, is, becauſe, by her clamorous and importunate voice, ſhe particularly ſeems always calling upon it; thence κοράσσω ἀ κόραξ, is to aſk earneſtly, Ælian. l. ii. c. 48. And, ſince there were ravens on the banks of the Nile more clamorous than the reſt of that ſpecies, thoſe probably are meant in this place.

Ibid, *Who in the cruel oſtrich has ſubdu'd*, &c.] There are many inſtances of this bird's ſtupidity; let two ſuffice.

Firſt, It covers its head in the reeds, and thinks itſelf all out ſight.

——Stat lumine clauſo
Ridendum revoluta caput; creditque latere
Quae non ipſa videt.—— Claud.

Secondly, They that go in purſuit of them, draw the ſkin of an oſtrich's neck on one hand, which proves a ſufficient lure to take them with the other.

They have ſo little brain, that Heliogabalus had ſix hundred heads for his ſupper.

Here we may obſerve, that our judicious, as well as ſublime author, juſt touches the great points of diſtinction in each creature, and then haſtens to another. *A*

description is exact, when you cannot add but what is common to another thing; nor withdraw, but something peculiarly belonging to the thing described. A likeness is lost in too much description, as a meaning often in too much illustration.

P. 194. *What time she skims along the field*, &c.] Here is marked another peculiar quality of this creature, which neither flies, nor runs distinctly, but has a motion composed of both, and, using its wings as sails, make great speed.

Vasta velut Lybiae venantum vocibus ales
Cum premitur, calidas cursu transmittit arenas,
Inque modum veli sinuatis flamine pennis
Pulverulenta volat ——— Claud. in Eutr.

Ibid. *She scorns the rider, and pursuing steed.*] Xenophon says, Cyrus had horses that could overtake the goat, and the wild-ass; but none that could reach this creature. A thousand golden ducats, or a hundred camels, was the stated price of a horse that could equal their speed.

Ibid. *How rich the peacock*, &c.] Though this bird is but just mentioned in my author, I could not forbear going a little farther, and spreading those beautiful plumes (which are there shut up) into half a dozen lines. The circumstance I have marked of his opening his plumes to the sun is true. 'Expandit colores adverso maxime soli, quia sic fulgentius radiant.' Plin. l. 10. c. 20.

Ibid. *Though strong the hawk, though practis'd well to fly.*] Thuanis (de re accip.) mentions a hawk that flew from Paris to London in a night.

And the Egyptians, in regard to its ſwiftneſs, made it their ſymbol for the wind; for which reaſon we may ſuppoſe the hawk, as well as the crow above, to have been a bird of note in Egypt.

Ibid. *Thence wide o'er nature takes her dread ſurvey*, &c.] The eagle is ſaid to be of ſo acute a ſight, that, when ſhe is ſo high in air that man cannot ſee her, ſhe can diſcern the ſmalleſt fiſh under water. My author accurately underſtood the nature of the creatures he deſcribes, and ſeems to have been a naturaliſt, as well as a poet, which the next note will confirm.

Ibid. *Know'ſt thou how many moons, by me aſſign'd*, &c.] The meaning of this queſtion is, Knoweſt thou the time and circumſtances of their bringing forth? for to know the time only was eaſy, and had nothing extraordinary in it; but the circumſtances had ſomething peculiarly expreſſive of God's Providence, which makes the queſtion proper in this place. Pliny obſerves, that the hind with young is by inſtinct directed to a certain herb, called Seſelis, which facilitates the birth. Thunder alſo (which looks like the more immediate hand of Providence) has the ſame effect; Pſal. xxix. In ſo early an age to obſerve theſe things, may ſtyle our author a naturaliſt.

Page 195. *Survey the warlike horſe*, &c.] The deſcription of the horſe is the moſt celebrated of any in the poem. There is an excellent critic on it in the Guardian. I ſhall therefore only obſerve, that, in this deſcription, as in other parts of this ſpeech, our vulgar tranſlation has much more ſpirit than the Septuagint; it always takes the original in the moſt po-

etical and exalted ſenſe, ſo that moſt commentators, even on the Hebrew itſelf, fall beneath it.

Page 196. *By the pale moon they take their deſtin'd round*, &c.] Purſuing their prey by night is true of moſt wild beaſts, particularly the lion; Pſal. civ. 20. The Arabians have one among their five hundred names for the lion, which ſignifies, The hunter by moonſhine.

Page 197. *He ſinks a river, and he thirſts again*, &c.

Cephiſi glaciale caput, quo ſuetus anhelam
Ferre ſitim Python, amnemque avertere ponto.

Stat. Theb. v. 349.

Qui ſpiris tegeret montes, hauriret hiatu
Flumina, &c. Claud. praef. in Ruf.

Let not then this hyperbole ſeem too much for an eaſtern poet, though ſome commentators of name ſtrain hard in this place for a new conſtruction, through fear of it.

Ibid. *Go to the Nile, and from its fruitful ſide*, &c. The taking the crocodile is moſt difficult. Diodorus ſays they are not to be taken but by iron nets. When Auguſtus conquered Egypt, he ſtruck a medal, the impreſs of which was a crocodile chained to a palm-tree, with this inſcription, 'Nemo antea relegavit.'

Page 198. *The raſheſt dare not rouſe him up*, &c.] This alludes to a cuſtom of this creature, which is, when ſated with fiſh, to come aſhore, and ſleep among the reeds.

Page 198. ——*Behold*,

Deſtruction yawns; his ſpacious jaws unfold, &c.] The crocodile's mouth is exceeding wide. When he gapes, ſays Pliny, 'ſit totum os.' Martial ſays to his old woman,

Cum comparata rictibus tuis ora
Niliacus habet crocodilus auguſta.

So that the expreſſion here is barely juſt.

Page 198. *Fate iſſues from his jaws in ſtreams of fire,* &c. This too is nearer truth than at firſt view may be imagin'd. The crocodile, ſay the naturaliſts, lying long under water, and being there forced to hold its breath, when it emerges, the breathe long repreſſed is hot, and burſts out ſo violently, that it reſembles fire and ſmoke. The horſe ſuppreſſes not his breath by any means ſo long, neither is he ſo fierce and animated: Yet the moſt correct of poets ventures to uſe the ſame metaphor concerning him.

Collectumque premens volvit ſub naribus ignem.

By this and the foregoing note, I would caution againſt a falſe opinion of the eaſtern boldneſs, from paſſages in them ill underſtood.

Page 199. *Large is his front; and, when his burniſh'd eyes,* &c.] 'His eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.' I think this gives us as great an image of the thing it would expreſs, as can enter the thought of man. It is not improbable, that the Egyptians ſtole their hieroglyphic for the morning, which is the crocodile's eye, from this paſſage; though no commentator I have ſeen mentions it. It is eaſy to conceive how the Egyptians ſhould be both readers and admirers of the writings of Moſes, whom I ſuppoſe the author of this poem.

I have obſerved already, that three or four of the creatures here deſcribed are Egyptian; the two laſt are notoriouſly ſo; they are the river-horſe and the crocodile, thoſe celebrated inhabitants of the Nile;

and on these two it is that our author chiefly dwells. It would have been expected from an author more remote from that river than Moses, in a catalogue of creatures produced to magnify their Creator, to have dwelt on the two largest works of his hand, viz. the elephant and the whale: This is so natural an expectation, that some commentators have rendered Behemoth and Leviathan, the elephant and whale, though the descriptions in our author will not admit of it; but Moses being (as we may well suppose) under an immediate terror of the hippopotamos and crocodile, from their daily mischiefs aud ravages around him, it is very accountable why he should permit them to take place.

THE END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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